

# The New York Times

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## ART IN REVIEW

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### David Askevold

Canada  
55 Chrystie Street  
Lower East Side  
Through Monday

At the moment, the basementlike ground floor space of this gallery seems to have traveled back in time to the early 1970's and landed near 112 Greene Street, a legendary artist-run space in SoHo. In a video installation titled "The Two Hanks," David Askevold, a veteran Conceptual artist and one of the founders of the Nova Scotia School of Art and Design in Halifax, is exorcizing his longtime fascination with Hank Williams and Hank Snow. These two country music heroes were polar opposites, the first a reckless alcoholic, the second a teetotaler.

The space is dominated by a stage, a bench and a long, low channel, all made of raw plywood. Playing on a small monitor is a smoky black-and-white video that could easily be 30 years old but actually documents a performance on the stage at the show's opening. On the video Mr. Askevold creates two ghostlike columns of fog by pouring liquid (beer in one case, water in the other) onto dangling clumps of dry ice. He strums an electric guitar and chants the musicians' shared first name.

Luckily a real musician was also present, playing along with recordings of music by the two Hanks on a theremin, which wails like a slide guitar and is appropriately eerie in sound and operation. If you last through the 20-minute video, take it as a tribute to the appended music, the haunting way its sound fills the room and Mr. Askevold's serious, unassuming manner — a distinguishing characteristic of much of the art of his youth.

ROBERTA SMITH