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New Painting (Hal Bromm Gallery, 90 West Broadway): Even the most modest among us can get delusions of grandeur by mounting the newly refurbished staircase — one of the finest things of its kind — that leads to Hal Bromm's second-floor gallery. The windows are great, too, ablaze as they are with the hard night light of lower Manhattan and giving as they do onto Chambers Street, Hudson Street and West Broadway, all at once.

As happened last year, Hal Bromm has got together a bunch of younger painters, some of them quite unfamiliar, and given them their heads. None of the paintings in the show are marked "sotto voce," and the effect of quite so much fortissimo in such grand austere spaces is startling. It also crossed the mind of this visitor that when it came to his artists' names, Hal Bromm was putting us on. But, assuming that there really is someone called Keiko Bonk, he or she does a nice job of painting on derelict television sets. Charles Parkalis has a strong line with busty nudes, and Judy Glantzman's three-dimensional cutout paintings have a likable vivacity. (Through Feb. 2.)

By JOHN RUSSELL

HAL BROMM