

HESSE FLATOW

Olsen, A. (2026, January 13). "Inside 'Gossip', New York's Under-the-Radar Crit Group." *Artnet*. Online.

The all-woman artists' group is rooted in a long art-historical tradition.



Langdon Graves, *Magical Thinking* (2025). Photo: Ethan Browning. Courtesy of Art in Buildings.

On a frigid evening this past December, a group of eleven women artists gathered in the lobby of an office building in downtown Manhattan. Among them was Langdon Graves, whose exhibition "Mental Model," produced by Art in Buildings, is installed inside the entrance of 125 Maiden Lane. On view through January 23, 2026, the artists convened to view, discuss, and reflect on the work on view.

The artists belong to the "crit" group Gossip, currently comprised of 20 members who meet regularly in locations ranging from their own studios to gallery spaces to explore work, receive critical feedback, exchange ideas, and geek out over art. The group, which has fluctuated in members over the years, currently includes artists such as Jenna Gribbon, Erin M. Riley, and Julie Curtiss just to name a few.



Installation view of "Langdon Graves: Mental Model" (2025).
Photo: Ethan Browning. Courtesy of Art in Buildings.

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While artists groups are certainly not new or even particularly novel, they are often only considered seriously when viewed through a historical lens. Conversations today about artists are largely tethered to their relationships to the market, collectors, institutions, galleries, or more broadly the social, economic, or political climate. But throughout time, it is artists' relationships to other artists that have proven a potent undercurrent—perhaps more potent than all others, influencing the history, present, and future of art-making itself.



Langdon Graves leads a discussion of her show "Mental Model" (2025) for members of Gossip.
Photo: A. Olsen.

Establishing Community

"We technically started it in 2009," said Jessica Stoller on a video call ahead of the meetup at Graves's exhibition. "It was basically several of us that went to grad school together at Cranbrook Academy of Art." The impetus for Gossip was a group email sent by Kelli Miller, now the head of a design studio and a filmmaker, who wrote:

"One afternoon, after a day of solitude in my studio, I blurted out the statement 'I need to get out of this studio!' And an idea was born. Wouldn't it be great to have a classic/contemporary/updated type of quarterly salon style 'meeting' with a handful of creative and active artists? This would be a forum for discussing ideas and current work, getting some critical feedback, catching up on the latest happenings in the creative realms and sharing our knowledge and experiences. Nothing too serious, something completely honest, a place to casually engage in a dialogue about work and ideas between committed artists."

Miller went on to suggest quarterly meetings where the then small handful of artists could bring their work, share ideas, or simply talk about what they'd been obsessing over, formatted in a manner parallel to that of a class critique like art students go through in school. The original name was Get Out.

"This was before Jordan Peele's amazing film *Get Out*, so we have since abandoned that moniker" Stoller laughed.

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Members of Gossip inside "Jessica Stoller: Split" (2025) at P.P.O.W. Courtesy of Gossip.

The new name came from artist, writer, and group member since 2018 Virginia Wagner, who learned about the evolving definition of gossip through a podcast and inspired by theoretician Silvia Federici's writing on the term—it was first associated with strong female friendships—and its subsequent demonization.

In the approximately 17 years since the group first coalesced, participation has experienced flux resulting from people moving away, being busy with projects, family, and life in general, and new people being introduced. But the gravitational core of having a space by and for artists has remained the same.

Adding to the dynamic nature of Gossip is its malleable approach to defining creativity and artistry, and members aren't exclusively fine artists, like Miller whose work is largely in the realm of film and design.

"It's not homogenized in that way," noted Stoller. "It's definitely very multidisciplinary."

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Members of Gossip inside "Erin M. Riley: Life Looks Like a House For a Few Hours" (2025) at P.P.O.W.
Photo: Sarah Cascone.

Creative and Generative Value

The locale of Gossip's meeting and discussions is always changing, as are the works or ideas being discussed.

The month prior to Langdon's Art in Building exhibition, the group went to P.P.O.W. (the representing gallery of four Gossip artists) where dual solo shows also happened to be two members of Gossip: "Erin M. Riley: Life Looks Like a House For a Few Hours" and "Elizabeth Glaessner: Running Water." And inspired by a recent book the group read (a book club being yet another extension of Gossip), they recently hosted an A.I. researcher and philosopher to give a talk and lead a discussion around art and A.I.

Reaching out to a number of the artists via email, despite their disparate practices, each described and expressed gratitude for the value of the artist-to-artist audience. "It's the best audience I could ask for—different than critics, or a public that may or may not show up," wrote Wagner. "One of the main reasons I make art is to be a part of the conversation unfolding now. That's what we do—we have conversations."

Stoller continued this point, writing, "It feels like having a built-in audience—one that is always genuinely excited to see and discuss my work, just as I am continually blown away by theirs." As one of the longest standing members of the group, Stoller described the sense of fulfillment from watching how each artist's practice has evolved over time.

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Members of Gossip inside "Robin F. Williams: Good Mourning" (2024) at P.P.O.W. Courtesy of Gossip.

Robin F. Williams, who joined in 2014, is also a member of Donut Club, another artist group that meets monthly for breakfast in Greenpoint, which functions more as a social outlet than a practice-oriented critique, and is a founding member of Artists Commit, a mission-driven artists group. Williams noted the difference between the Gossip audience and audiences at large, which are typically what take focus in the broader art world. "Sometimes it can feel hard to find an audience for your work, like shouting into the void," she said. "This group has inoculated me against that feeling. I know I can always make art for this community, and it will be received."

Williams also pointed out the more practical value of the group as well. "My favorite time to have the group to my studio is when I'm unsure or stuck. I've gotten very helpful feedback and suggestions for ways to move forward in my work. I am also consistently inspired by the other artists in the group," she noted. "They influence me all the time. I think it's beautiful that many of us have explored overlapping themes through the years, but we've managed to all maintain our own voices in our respective work."

Chrissy Anglier, member of Gossip and Donut Club, started her own offshoot group earlier this year; she echoed Williams's sentiments, writing how the crit group offered psychological grounding in the face of the "unpredictability of being an artist," and that it, more practically, "is a helpful resource in how to navigate matters of career and business," given members are at varying stages in their professional and artistic trajectories.

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Members of Gossip at the studio of Chrissy Angliker (2021). Courtesy of Gossip.

A Footnote of Art History

Art history is littered with artist groups and relationships, but more often than not, they are referenced in the manner of a footnotes within individual artist biographies. Because these influences often cannot be explicitly traced into the work itself, it is an elusive facet to not only an artist's practice but the scope of art-making at any given time—historical or present day.

For example, Milton Avery (1885–1965) exhibited at New York's Opportunity Gallery in 1928 alongside Marcus Rothkowitz, later Mark Rothko. Through Rothko, Avery met Adolph Gottlieb, and the trio met regularly, often daily, for drawing sessions. Though Avery was nearly two decades older and maintained a more representational style while the younger two embraced abstraction, their collaboration functioned as a sustained exchange—much like the collective ethos of Gossip.

Similarly, the 19th-century artist Emma Stebbins, best known for her Bethesda Fountain commission (1873), maintained a creative network in Rome with her wife, actress Charlotte Cushman, and a circle of women artists who called themselves the "Jolly Bachelors." The influence and support of these creative webs exemplify how close-knit, private networks can sustain artistic development and amplify success.

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Robin F. Williams and Michelle Hinebrook in Chrissy Angliker's studio (2021). Courtesy of Gossip.

Gossip recalls these highly generative yet ultimately opaque foundations to many artists' practices. What Avery, Rothko, and Gottlieb, or Stebbins and Cushman with their circle, talked about in detail (barring any archival diaries or letters) is anyone's guess. After a fortunate opportunity to sit-in on the meeting at Graves' exhibition, it is clear that the scope of discussion is broader than one might otherwise imagine: questions and explanations around technical execution and materials; approaches to didactics and other modes of communication with the audience (QR codes? Audio? How much explanation is too much?); personal stories and traumas; themes and inspirations. What emerged was a constellation of consideration and topics not only directly connected to Graves's work but to every artist present as well.

Perhaps one day, Gossip will appear in each member's chronology, as it did in Avery's. Or perhaps, it will be referred to in accounts of art in our time, taking into consideration that artists groups like it offer a new perspective on contemporary art-making. That would do away with the myth of total auteurism and the idea of the artist working in isolation. Instead, a greater, collective conception of creativity and creative exchange might, finally, be able to emerge.

At time of writing, Gossip members include: Lara Allen, Chrissy Angliker, Gina Beavers, Julie Curtiss, Keetra Dean Dixon, Meg Franklin, Liz Glaessner, Langdon Graves, Jenna Gribbon, Charlotte Hallberg, Michelle Hinebrook, MaryKate Maher, Kelli Miller, Jenny Morgan, Rose Nestler, Erin M. Riley, Hiba Schahbaz, Jessica Stoller, Virginia Wagner, Robin F. Williams.