



THE NEW YORKER

TABLES FOR TWO

THE SMILE

26 Bond St. ( 646-329-5836)

by Silvia Killingsworth

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London's Bond Street is known for high-end retail shops and fashion houses; its cobblestoned American cousin is a younger, artsier version, anchored by a Herzog and de Meuron luxury residence. The Smile, a charming subterranean café, is the casual social nexus for its bed-headed idlers. The owners, Carlos Quirarte and Matt Kliegman, who are the bearded duo behind the exclusive Jane Ballroom, have cultivated a cool crowd of bohemian types with a robust celebrity contingent, pint-size former child stars and quart-size mumblecore actresses alike. The executive chef, Melia Marden, is the daughter of the abstract painter Brice Marden, who, in the sixties, lived and worked



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Wooden shelves are full of tchotchkes—knitting kits by Wool and the Gang, Moscot vintage eyewear, and Mariage Frères tea. They're all for sale, though they garner about as much interest as the six-pound cans of crushed tomatoes and tins of Bazzini nuts. The space was conceived as a general store, but it turns out that people like to sit and eat more than they like to stand and shop. Evenings at the Smile feel like an intimate dinner party with young tastemakers—you may worry about your outfit, but don't. Marden, who was photographed in the nude by Robert Mapplethorpe at age three, defended him at age nine, saying, "Everybody was born without clothes." (Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Entrées \$15-\$19.) ♦