



Carroll Dunham, *Now and Around Here (3)*, 2015, mixed media on linen, 88 1/2 × 68 1/2".

knees, and feet to the view beyond: a female bather, perhaps, or dog. As with the women, the setting is an Edenic natural arena, and also as with the women, the man is naked, but where Dunham earlier made penises suggest guns, or vice versa, he now makes them mushroom-like and rhymes them sweetly with acorns and other flora. And whereas the women are wonderfully active, the man appears to be peacefully sunbathing. If Eve has gotten her Adam, he is a harmless one this time around, though something of a voyeur.

These paintings have been on the way for a while; the first of them, *Now and Around Here (1)*, was finished last year but begun in 2011. The sense of a change in direction may be misleading, then, but the show remained surprising for viewers of Dunham's last several exhibitions at this gallery. Also included was a series of three works titled "Big Bang (actual size)," made between 2012 and 2015, showing squooshy biomorphic orbs recalling Dunham's earlier paintings of planets and suns, and *Culture as a Verb*, 2013–15, in which a squooshy biomorphic orb threatens to swallow a tree like those in the garden scenes. It is as if Dunham were showing that imagery coming to an end.

If so, I will miss Dunham's big women, and the splendid and prurient goofiness of those paintings. Their pastoral theme, and their fondness for bathing and swimming, set them in a long tradition going back, in the modern age, to Matisse and Cézanne, a history illuminating their ungainly vitality. But there may be life in them yet: The work that got pride of place in the show, being exhibited with a large suite of the drawings that led to it, was *Horse and Rider (My X)*, 2013–15, in which a woman on horseback raises her arms to the sun. To right and left, the stubby branches of trees poke out in different directions, creating visual depth in the same way as the lances of Uccello's Renaissance knights. (The drawings show that the woman herself once held a lance, though it is gone from the final image.) In *Horse and Rider (My X)* and in these works generally, Dunham likes to spell out such painterly devices, making it clear, for example, how he developed the composition's structure, that the branches and the horse's legs have been formed the same way, and that an airborne scattering of falling leaves is a kind of *repoussoir*. This knowing quality gives worldliness to the painting without undermining its fabulous pagan hedonism.

—David Frankel

Yoko Ono

GALERIE LELONG/ANDREA ROSEN GALLERY

To those who wondered why Yoko Ono's "The Riverbed" comprised two separate installations, identical in their components, that were sited in two separate galleries in close proximity in Chelsea, the answer quickly became evident. The show resonated differently in its two locations: In my experience, the installation at Galerie Lelong was more concentrated, silent, and intimate, while the one at Andrea Rosen Gallery was more luminous, open, and social. Others might have felt differently. But that is all to the point, for each visit was unique, affected by its participant's individual memories and perceptions.

Ono made objects available, accompanied by brief instructions, offering each viewer the opportunity to use them creatively. *Stone Piece*, 2015, consisted of river stones—inscribed, like Tibetan prayer stones, with words—that could be collected by the visitor and brought, as objects of contemplation, onto the meditation cushions scattered around the room. *Line Piece*, 2015, invited visitors to draw a line in a book and then expand it three-dimensionally into the space by manipulating strings attached to a wall. Perceptible only at close proximity, the thin cords created an unexpected obstacle to movement in the gallery space, drawing viewers' attention to their own bodies—to the here and now. To similar effect, Ono re-executed *Mend Piece* (1966/2015). For that installation, viewers were able to choose fragments of broken cups and plates, and were invited to recompose them with glue, twine, and tape. Day after day, shelves were filled with these "repaired" objects, all of them different and completely new. They are silent traces of each visitor's Zen-like private activity, an encounter with his or her inner space. Creativity is the flip side of destruction, and both the artist and the public collaborated in this regenerative process.

Ono brings contemplative and emotionally vibrant space into being—space that merges art and life. She transformed the gallery into a container, an intimate place of creative expression, sharing, and meditation. I have no problem meditating with other people around, and I have done so at other times, sitting with eyes open in front of Marina Abramović at the Museum of Modern Art, and blindfolded in her 2014 show at Sean Kelly Gallery in New York. I also did it here, on two occasions, noting the differences. Unlike Abramović, who overtly presents herself as a catalyst of experience, Ono more frequently limits herself to providing a neutral field: By letting her own authorial presence fade into the background, she makes it easier for us to perceive our own subjectivity and role in the work. The provisional configuration of these two shows, apparently identical but both subject to continual change,



Yoko Ono, *Mend Piece*, 1966/2015, mixed media, dimensions variable. Galerie Lelong.

indicated the indeterminate quality of experience. And the repetition of gestures in the two separate spaces reminded visitors that every action, no matter how brief or quotidian, is unrepeatably unique.

—Ida Panicelli

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

Ann Veronica Janssens

BORTOLAMI

A whisper of a show, spare to the point of near-disappearance, Ann Veronica Janssens's recent exhibition at Bortolami—the Belgium-based artist's solo debut at the gallery, timed to coincide with the first American museum survey of her work, at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas—provided a modest glimpse into her range of sculptural, spatial, and atmospheric concerns, and a sense of both the strengths and limitations of her practice. Though obviously a temperamental descendant of the Light and Space artists, Janssens, who has shown widely in Europe, also derives formal strategies from the projected-image work of post-Minimalists such as Anthony McCall. Taken together, the limited selection on view here hinted at the low-key perceptual poetics that underpin her project, but individually the works' effects were often so subtle and ambiguous that their stated ambitions—to activate the space and alter visitors' perceptions—threatened at times to dissolve into the realm of wishful thinking.

The exhibition consisted of six individual pieces showcasing a number of Janssens's approaches, all of which rely on interventions (material or immaterial) into a space in an attempt to create certain experiential moments or perceptual zones. As is characteristic of her program, Janssens took advantage of the range of available surfaces—works were hung at various locations along the walls, while one was set on the floor and another projected into space. This recognition of the possibilities latent in the physical environment was most vivid in *Gambie*, 1995/2015, an eight-foot-long fluorescent tube that passed from the gallery's entrance space into its main room through a cut in the wall made a dozen or more feet above the ground. The only work not conceived in 2015 on view, the piece did suggest an engagement with the existing architectural fabric, but beyond that its impact was essentially negligible amid the other elements of the brightly lit gallery's illumination scheme. Somewhat more convincing gestures awaited in the central gallery, including *Untitled (blue glitter)*, a smear of sparkling electric-turquoise powder drifted across the cracked concrete floor; a pair of corrugated aluminum panels, both titled *Moonlight*, given a platinum-leaf coating, and made to hover uncannily above the viewer at an angle from the walls like little awnings; and *Californian Blinds #2*, a commercial vertical louver hung frontally and decorated with gold leaf. These wall-based pieces suggested one of the more intriguing aspects of Janssens's enterprise—an attempt to coax out a certain kind of phenomenological energy from relatively simple materials (precious metal frostings notwithstanding). However, despite its apparent nod, in both title and form, to Robert Irwin and other first-generation West Coast perceptualists, *Californian Blinds* relied on a fairly predictable lenticular effect, while the *Moonlight* panels produced almost no effect at all aside from a highly localized division of space and a faint cast that only the most generous of readings would connect either perceptually or metaphorically to lunar glow.

The show's final work, and its ostensible centerpiece, was a projection set alone in a separate room. With an array of pinkish spotlights projecting a sort of starburst into a field of artificially produced haze, *Untitled* was a familiar form for those who know Janssens's practice—the artist has produced a number of closely related works over the

years, including *Rose*, a strikingly similar piece made in 2007. *Untitled* operated in three zones—the small lights produced a seven-pointed star shape in an indeterminate space away from the wall on which they were placed, lit the vaguely fogged room with a soft magenta radiance, and shone a kind of inverted image on the opposite wall, where seven glowing



Ann Veronica Janssens, *Untitled (blue glitter)*, 2015, glitter, dimensions variable.

blush-colored circles surrounded an equivalent seven-sided negative space. Despite its trappings and intent, *Untitled* was finally neither truly immersive like the Light and Space work to which it owes a significant debt, nor apparently interested, à la Dan Flavin, in explicitly foregrounding the material mechanisms of illumination. Instead, like the rest of this show, it felt strangely marooned between artifact and effect, neither fully committed to nor as fully persuasive as either.

—Jeffrey Kastner

Miranda Lichtenstein

ELIZABETH DEE

Plastic bags have fallen on hard times since they stole the show in *American Beauty* (1999), in a scene reminiscent of Nathaniel Dorsky's film *Variations* from a year earlier. No longer the mesmerizing Isadora Duncan of refuse, reminding us of the surprising elegance stirring in the corners of parking lots and our lives, plastic is now understood to represent a growing crisis, leaching toxins and forming garbage continents in the ocean. In New York City, it's one more index of class—Whole Foods no longer uses plastic bags, but your corner bodega does.

Into this mix come Miranda Lichtenstein's alluring 2015 photographs of plastic bags, in her fifth exhibition at Elizabeth Dee. At first glance, this show appeared to take up familiar themes of her practice: the still life as experiment, an interest in surface obfuscations and misaligned systems of representation, and the photograph as a container of enigmatic presence. Lush and mysterious, these images' deep teals and complementary oranges, wet and weathered skins, sutures and flatness, kept reminding me of decoupage and even the stunning textures in the Alberto Burri exhibit simultaneously on view uptown. (The most abstract photographs were found in the side office, shadowy black-and-white prints whose titles—*Bodega [Slash]* and *Bodega [Mirror]*—carried a little heavier portent.) Their subject matter is actually thrice recycled: Over the course of two years, Lichtenstein has been photographing sculptures by New York-based artist Josh Blackwell, in which he's cut, painted, joined together, and hand-stitched, with fabrics and metal, classic takeout and deli bags—vibrant works that reflect the efficient ingenuity with discarded materials found in folk art around the world. Lichtenstein's photographs never show the complete object.