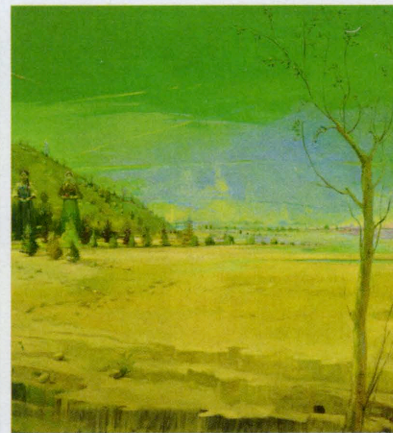
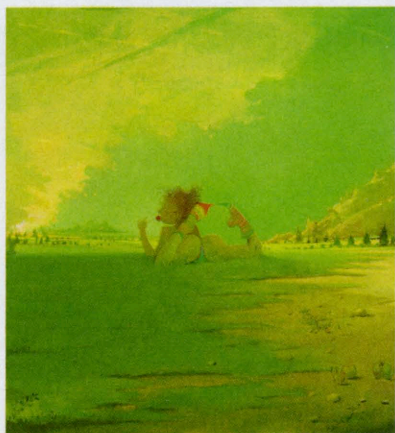


# EXHIBITION REVIEWS



Lisa Yuskavage: *Triptych*, 2011, oil on linen, each panel 77¼ by 70⅞ inches; at David Zwirner.

## NEW YORK LISA YUSKAVAGE DAVID ZWIRNER

Rosy and ripe, the pneumatic breasts and butts of Lisa Yuskavage's female subjects continue to expand. Likewise, the manner in which they're painted—tickled and licked, brushed lightly and gently smeared—grows ever more teasingly intimate. More surprisingly, Yuskavage's latest paintings feature complex figurative groupings in panoramic landscapes, sometimes rendered at a scale that suggests academic history painting. At nearly 18 feet wide, *Triptych* (2011), the show's centerpiece, summons comparisons with Rubens and Delacroix—and also, more closely, with such decorative mural cycles as those by Maxfield Parrish (whose luminous, Easter-egg palette is unmistakably present in this painting's sunset pinks and turquoises) and the famous wall paintings by Howard Chandler Christy at New York's Café des Artistes, with their gamboling candy-colored nymphs. Yuskavage, too, likes to stir up appetites.

The central panel of *Triptych* is dominated by a naked woman flung over a bench, knees up. Her (shaved) crotch is, pornlike, the painting's focus; her body and head are invisible behind. But allegory is also at hand: advancing behind her, down from distant mountains and across sunlit plains, is a troop of sober-faced women in puritanical kerchiefs and ankle-length skirts, bearing platters of wholesome fruits and vegetables. These armies of the righteous—surely they

speak for political realities both within and beyond the art world—reappear in *Afternoon Feeding* (2011), marching with impassive determination toward an especially luscious babe. Blond bangs blowing over her face and a toothpick in her mouth, she offers luminous, jewel-toned orbs to a kneeling supplicant.

Languorously disposed in the great outdoors, Yuskavage's titanic goddesses invite a different kind of reading than the hothouse subjects of much of her previous work—the newly immersive environments deploy the language of public consumption rather than private relish. The exception, *Fireplace* (2010), presents two women indoors, the exposed flesh of the central figure dense and waxy white. Amid the pumped-up landscapes around it, this painting feels stifling.

The question of humor has been raised with Yuskavage's work from the beginning; mostly, it seems to have been a matter of nervous laughter, perhaps now subsiding. It can be argued that the artist has herself contributed to her audience's shock resistance, although it likely also derives from the unstoppable proliferation, in the public realm, of ever more varied sexual imagery, along with the increasing availability of radical cosmetic surgeries that tend to fictionalize physiognomy (a condition that several artists have explored). If Yuskavage's new paintings are not apt to fluster viewers, they do succeed in freshening her own field by opening it to the crosswinds of social narrative.

—Nancy Princenthal

## URS FISCHER AND CASSANDRA MACLEOD GAVIN BROWN'S ENTERPRISE

For his 2007 show at Gavin Brown's Enterprise, Urs Fischer presented a void, hiring contractors to excavate an 8-foot-deep crater in the gallery's main room. For his recent exhibition at the same venue, Fischer offered up, by contrast, a glut of objects and images, which nevertheless constituted an environment just as carefully calculated. It was further proof, if any were needed, that while his work is rooted in things and materials, Fischer's real forte is the transformation of physical and psychic space.

Crowded into Brown's three big galleries were 173 tables ranging widely in size and height, all with colorful steel bases and each with a top sporting one of 80 or so photomontages. The tables, arranged with barely enough room to pass between them, and at times stacked as many as five high, were equipped with mismatched chairs, flower arrangements in kitschy vases and Fischer's own lumpy bronze sculptures of birds and grotesque heads. Paired with the tables were salon-style groupings of paintings by Fischer's domestic partner, Cassandra MacLeod. The impression was of something between an art installation, a furniture showroom and a social space. In fact, it was a little bit of each.

The selection of found images in Fischer's works, while casual, was not entirely arbitrary; porn, great art, cartoons and pictures of food and pets predomi-