

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Whitney Museum

"America Is Hard to See"

The museum has opened in Renzo Piano's ingenious new building, on Gansevoort Street, and brings with it a refurbished sense of mission for the eighty-four-year-old institution, signalled by the inaugural show, of six hundred and fifty works from the permanent collection. The timing couldn't be better for a detailed and vividly embodied engagement with the question of what has been meant by "American" modern art. Through Sept. 27.

Jewish Museum

"Revolution of the Eye: Modern Art and the Birth of American Television"

By turns illuminating and exasperating, this extensive show opens with footage of Barbra Streisand in the galleries of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, amid paintings by Léger and Kupka. The curator Maurice Berger makes some persuasive claims about the influence of fine art on ambitious television of the postwar era: the credits for the surrealist "Twilight Zone," for instance, borrowed their rotating spiral from Marcel Duchamp's "Anémic Cinéma." But a more judicious assessment of art and TV's interrelationship might not place an Agnes Martin drawing next to a promotional photo of Miss U.S.A., and the rapid-fire editing of numerous clips—eleven artists' interviews condensed to less than three minutes, for example—underestimates viewers' attention spans. Through Sept. 20.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Elmgreen & Dragset

The Norwegian-Danish duo, best known for their Berlin memorial to gay victims of the Holocaust, have transformed this townhouse gallery into a well-appointed bedroom, suffused with mothballs and melancholy. A shelf of books by Wilde, Mann, and Philip Johnson, and anti-retroviral meds on the nightstand, evoke both the mind and the body of its absent occupant, perhaps an artist or architect (note the drafting table) of a certain age, whose love affairs are traced in framed photographs of young men. Elmgreen & Dragset deploy their fiction deftly, but there's a frisson of autobiography here, as if they, too, are bracing for the betrayals and heartbreaks of aging. Through May 23. (Galerie Perrotin, 909 Madison Ave., at 73rd St. 212-812-2902.)

Simon Hantaï

The Hungarian-born abstract painter moved to Paris after the Second World War; he died there in 2008. If the art world were a just place, this ravishing showcase of his early works would open American eyes to the overlooked virtues of French postwar painting. In 1960, inspired by Pollock as much as by Matisse, Hantaï hit upon his

technique of *pliage*—painting on crumpled canvases that, when stretched, resolved into celestial abstractions that collapsed distinctions between positive and negative space. The earliest pieces here are dense and earthy, but by the late sixties Hantaï was creating all-over abstractions whose passages of yellow and green commingle with white space with harmonious ease. Through June 26. (Mnuchin, 45 E. 78th St. 212-861-0020.)

William Larson

These startling black-and-white images were made electronically four decades ago, using signals transmitted by fax machines. The combinations of pictures (hands, lips, a huge housefly), words ("press," "play," "prim," "plan"), and overlapping lines of jittery static suggest concrete poetry illustrated by Robert Rauschenberg. Closer to drawing than they are to photography, Larson's experiments foreshadowed the digital-image revolution to come, and are all the more fascinating for their primitive grit. Through July 2. (Gitterman, 41 E. 57th St. 212-734-0868.)

Alexey Titarenko

Black-and-white cityscapes suggest memories in which some details are blurred and others are highlighted. (The effect is achieved through long exposures.) In the past, Titarenko has depicted crowds in his native St. Petersburg as apparitions drifting past massive stonework. His recent pictures of New York feature sidewalks full of solitary figures, but the mood is less oppressive and the surfaces have a silvery sheen. The images are often sparked with gold toning: windows glow as if reflecting setting suns, and an antique fire-alarm box takes on the aura of a museum piece. Through May 16. (Nailya Alexander, 41 E. 57th St. 212-315-2211.)

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Christopher Wool

How hard can it be to make inky messes and random tangles? Gruellingly so, for Wool, to a point where degrees of difficulty create meaning. This show picks up where the artist's Guggenheim retrospective, in 2013, left off, with paintings derived from Rorschach patterns and sculptures based on snarls of fencing wire that he found outdoors in Marfa, Texas. (There are also delicately scrawled etchings.) In black enamel and layered silkscreen, the paintings are desultory palimpsests of exacting decisions. For the sculptures, Wool made 3-D prints of the wire, blown up to plumbing-pipe thickness, and then cast them in bronze. (The weight-bearing parts are in copper-plated stainless steel.) The more arbitrary the look of Wool's art becomes, the more it dramatizes his ferocious will to make it. Through June 20. (Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 212-206-9100.)

Lisa Yuskavage

She's back and she's even better, without ceasing to be bad in a good way. Yuskavage's fantasies of preposterously voluptuous, sad girls—now plus the odd tender lad—are astonishingly well painted. The colors range from sumptuous grisaille to singing prismatic hues. The touch is consummately deft. The combination of gross imagery and serene mastery is Yuskavage's cynosure—an up-to-date proposition of painting's debased fate and unkillable hope like nothing else. Through June 13. (Zwirner, 533 W. 19th St. 212-727-2070.)

"The Light in Cuban Eyes"

This survey of contemporary Cuban photography is timely, but, while nearly all the pictures were made this century, little of it looks new or inventive. Perhaps that's why the most satisfying works are black and white and rooted in the documentary tradition. Arien Cang, José Julián Martí, Jorge Louis Álvarez Pupo, and Pedro Abascal view their countrymen with the sort of penetrating concern that gets below the surface of everyday events, from a cock fight to a game of dominos; in his portraits of gay men, Alejandro González gives the revolution's outcasts a powerful presence. Through May 23. (Mann, 525 W. 26th St. 212-989-7600.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Martin Beck

The rigorously composed photographs of this Austrian-born New Yorker depict full or empty vases, sometimes with a hand arranging flowers, sometimes with a full bouquet and a few dropped petals. Each is an updated vanitas for the digital age; they don't express the inevitability of death but, rather, the recession of life into images that are themselves only data. Elsewhere, a computer monitor flashes snippets of corporate-speak cribbed from a nineteen-seventies business manual. Like the minimalist and conceptual-art strategies of that era, the managerial cant Beck redeploys has become our new vernacular, for better or worse. Through May 17. (47 Canal, 291 Grand St. 646-415-7712.)

Jamian Juliano-Villani

If the Hudson River School dabbled with graffiti and airbrushes—and had an interest in sci-fi and comics—the results might resemble the three kick-ass paintings in this young New Jersey native's show. (Her canvases are so big and the gallery is so small that you may want to survey it first from the sidewalk.) Juliano-Villani has a daredevil's color sense and a wild imagination reinforced by a grab bag of references, in which George Alt bumps into Ralph Bakshi. Through May 17. (JTT, 170A Suffolk St. 212-574-8152.)

MUSEUMS SHORT LIST

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

"The Roof Garden
Commission: Pierre Huyghe."
Opens May 12.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

"Yoko Ono: One Woman Show,
1960-1971." Opens May 17.

MOMA PSI

"Wael Shawky: Cabaret
Crusades." Through Aug. 31.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

"Monir Shahroudy
Farmanfarmaian: Infinite
Possibility." Through June 3.

FRICK COLLECTION

"From Sèvres to Fifth Avenue:
French Porcelain at The Frick
Collection." Through April 24.

NEUE GALERIE

"Gustav Klimt and Adele
Bloch-Bauer: The Woman in
Gold." Through Sept. 7.

NEW MUSEUM

"Surround Audience: 2015
Triennial." Through May 15.

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

"Frida Kahlo: Art, Garden,
Life." Opens May 16.

NOGUCHI MUSEUM

"Highlights from the
Collection: Iconic Display."
Through Sept. 13.

SCULPTURECENTER

"Magali Reus / Michael E.
Smith / Erika Verzutti."
Through Aug. 3.

GALLERIES SHORT LIST

UPTOWN

Seth Price

Petzel
35 E. 67th St. 212-680-9467.
Opens May 15.

Dorothea Tanning

Boesky
118 E. 64th St. 212-680-9889.
Through June 27.

CHELSEA

Ellsworth Kelly
Marks
502 and 522 W. 22nd St.;
523 W. 24th St. 212-243-0200.
Opens May 13.

Richard Serra

Zwirner
537 W. 20th St. 212-517-8677.
Through July 24.

David Shrigley

Kern
532 W. 20th St. 212-367-9663.
Through May 23.

DOWNTOWN

Richard Dupont

Williams
55 Hester St. 212-229-2757.
Opens May 15.

Alex Katz

Brown
620 Greenwich St.
212-627-5258.
Through June 13.

Pam Lins

Uffner
170 Suffolk St. 212-274-0064.
Through May 31.