

ARTnews

MAY 2012

Naked or Nude

Tango and Passion: Albers's Secret Nudes

Tracey Emin: 'In a Rodin/Turner Sandwich'

Pretty Ugly: Cézanne's Bathers

Senior Moment: Depicting the Aging Body



Elizabeth Turk

Hirschl & Adler

Elizabeth Turk's work is as indebted to the history of sculpture as it is to expanding the genre's possibilities. This is Turk's particular talent. She uses marble to produce ethereal forms that push her medium in inventive and unexpected directions. Indeed, perhaps not since Michael Heizer's spatial interventions in the 1960s has an artist used absence to define sculptural space to such impressive effect.

Leaving behind the traditional lexicon of three-dimensional form, Turk employs an array of grinding tools to revise and reduce blocks of marble into lithe ribbons of stone. In several works in this show, Turk's sinuous bands of carved marble appeared draped, piled, or wrapped around their rough river-stone bases, while in others, graceful strands combined to produce delicate cage-like armatures encircling a void. The latter works were displayed on highly reflective steel pedestals—beautiful in their own right—and illuminated by carefully calibrated gallery lighting, all of which resulted in a dynamic and surprisingly immersive viewing experience.

In *Cage: Box 7* (2012), for example, the marble form practically dissolves amid the play of light and shadows cast on surrounding walls, replacing the very

idea of traditional stone sculpture in the round with a harmonious, visually striking allover environment. This work reveals the complex dialogue at the heart of Turk's endeavor, between the marble's solidity and mass and the artist's carved, swelling forms that seem to transcend the limitations of their medium. Turk, a 2010 MacArthur Foundation Fellowship recipient, has continuously sought to redefine and reimagine sculpture's potential, and this new body of work stands as an astonishing testament to those aims.

—Max Weintraub

Rowann Villency

Walter Wickiser

Rowann Villency's beautiful flower paintings explode in a profusion of colors: reds, pinks, oranges, turquoises, greens, golds, and violets. Whether working with acrylics or oil stick on canvas, linen, or paper, Villency revels in hues and textures. In spirit she could be a descendent of Monet, Dufy, Matisse, O'Keeffe, and Frankenthaler, celebrating light and the good life. Her works here, all 2011, seemed to invite everyone to join the party.

With its loosely painted, pastel-colored blossoms on a white ground, *Le Fleur en folie 1* was one of several large mixed-media pieces on paper, as airy as spring breezes and equally refreshing. The ravishing streaks of yellow, plum, chartreuse, and magenta offered a seductive escape from daily life. "Les Fleurs," a series of three works done with stencils and spray paint to create misty, layered effects, was part of a larger group that betrayed Japanese influences and revealed Vil-



Rowann Villency, *La Nuit en fleur 1*, 2011, acrylic and mixed media on paper, 30" x 22". Walter Wickiser.

lency in a less flamboyant but equally sensual mood.

Most striking of all were *La Fleur en feu 1*, *L'Inspiration diablé*, and the series "La Nuit en fleur," whose sizzling oranges, popping greens, and chrome yellows against dark backgrounds delivered some of the punch of Abstract Expressionism, without abandoning their botanical inspirations. Like Mrs. Dalloway in the flower shop, her arms brimming with lilacs, carnations, roses, and delphiniums, Villency seemed to be laughing with delight at nature's sheer profusion.

—Mona Molarsky

Daniel Dens

Louis K. Meisel

Walking into Belgian artist Daniel Dens's exhibition in some ways felt like stepping back in time. The artist's vivid, Pop-inspired canvases were like throwbacks to the late '60s. Indeed, emblazoned with silk-screened images of cultural icons, Hollywood celebrities, and sex symbols from the period, with Mick Jagger and Brigitte Bardot foremost among them, Dens's canvases unabashedly appropriate the look and style of Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg.



Elizabeth Turk, *Cage: Box 7*, 2012, marble, 20" x 15" x 15". Hirschl & Adler.