

NORTHEAST GALLERIES

Miranda Lichtenstein *Sound and Noise*



Drawing Room

Clockwise from door

1. **Jen** (2011) archival pigment print, 37" x 37"
2. **The Reader** (2005) polaroid, 5 3/16" x 4 3/16"
3. **Ganzfeld** (2005) polaroid, 4 3/16" x 5 3/16"
4. **Anechoic Chamber** (2005) polaroid, 4 3/16" x 5 3/16"
5. **Heaven's Gate** (2005) polaroid, 4 3/16" x 5 3/16"
6. **If you bring forth...** (2005) polaroid, 4 3/16" x 5 3/16"
7. **Floater** (2005) polaroid, 4 3/16" x 5 3/16"
8. **Dream Machine** (2007) polaroid, 4 3/16" x 5 3/16"
9. **Kaarin** (2010) archival pigment print 37" x 37"
10. **Clara** (2011) archival pigment print 37" x 37"

NORTHWEST GALLERY

Clockwise from door

11. **Ground #10** (2016) 40" x 31"
12. **Ground #12** (2016) 50" x 40"

13. **Ground #9** (2016) 24" x 18"
14. **Ground #11** (2016) 19" x 13"
15. **Ground # 2** (2016) 19" x 13"
archival pigment prints

NORTHEAST GALLERY

Clockwise from door

16. **Bodega (slash)** (2015) archival pigment print, 40" x 26.6"
17. **Siren** (1996/2016) C print, 84" x 90"
18. **Bodega (mirror)** (2015) archival pigment print, 40" x 26.6"

Curator's Essay

NORTHEAST GALLERIES

Miranda Lichtenstein *Sound and Noise*

29 October 2016 – 29 January 2017

"Miranda Lichtenstein: Sound and Noise," features a variety of distinct yet wholly intertwined works in photography the artist has produced in the last fifteen years. At the heart of this enterprise is a desire to make art that confronts the intangible: diverse states of mind, feelings, emotions and thoughts, processed through an ever-shifting medium. This pursuit yields gorgeous, accessible pictures that also disclose the artist's complex relationship to their status as representations of the photographically impalpable.

This is especially true of the small Polaroids in the "The Searchers", which depict quests for mental states of utopian sanctuary, the unknown, unreal, and utterly desirable, by showing human subjects in or on attempted voyages of secular enlightenment. This requires a visualization of a place of absolute calm and peace, a state of bliss, a rooting around for sanctuary. The resurgence since the 1960s of a broadly-defined "spirituality" provides a basis for these pictures that explore the aftermath of fitness and "mindfulness" merging into yoga, drum circles, solstice celebrations, transcendental meditation, floatation tanks, Ganzfeld experiments, et al, representing attempts by people to "find themselves" and connect to an inner wisdom. This is the photography of something that inherently cannot be seen, an interior experience, and a transformation that we might not recognize even if we do "see" it. In the same gallery haunting, barely-there images of singers mid-song, vocalizing with intense passion yet unheard, build upon Lichtenstein's interest in out-of-body experience. Motivated by musical performances she attended in which the singer appeared to enter a trance, she recruited vocalists to sit for her and requested only they perform a work that provoked a strong emotional response. While documentary photography often emphasizes the expression of the subject in heightened detail, Lichtenstein strips away particulars, redirecting the focus to the experiential, otherworldly realm, negating the idea that a portrait can reveal deeper internal states.

In the Northeast Gallery is a wall-sized print of a tornado siren, a signal of alarm precipitating panic that here is rendered mute. Shot off a VHS tape of hurricane and tornado disaster footage in 1995 and used in a music video directed by Lichtenstein for Saturnine 60, "Siren" is a cultural and environmental warning rendered ominous by its silence. Flanking "Siren" are two prints from her ongoing collaboration with the artist Josh Blackwell that further complicate things by obscuring claims of authorship. Her lush, large-scale prints of Blackwell's abraded plastic bodega bags become defamiliarised stand-ins for the "disposable" culture we inhabit. Inflating their eponymous subjects, they give otherwise flattened works volume and form, coupled with the elusive passage of light. Plastic appears simultaneously fleeting and expendable, as well as monolithic in its permanence and recurrence.

Rounding out the exhibition are Lichtenstein's most current investigations called "Grounds", made of cut and layered accumulations of photo paper. The void we perpetually attempt to fill is alluded to, indicated and perhaps even shown, while leaving open deeper questions about what we can see and what we think cannot be pictured through the act of photographing. The "Grounds" are made up of the remainders of prints, which originally were scans of embroidered plastic bags made by Blackwell. The scan produces a burnt edge, a burn from light, which frames the outline of each emptied image. In the iterations seen at MOCA a collage is produced on the wall by hanging multiple grounds on top of one another. They resemble maps, though cartographically untrustworthy ones in which territories are overlapped and the earth is scorched. As a gathering of varied yet aligned images, "Sound and Vision" is full of pensive and even philosophical confrontations with the visual in the allure of "sound" and the static and pain of averted "noise" and a comprehensive engagement with the ethereal through the visible.

Miranda Lichtenstein lives and works in New York, NY. Her work has been widely exhibited at institutions including The Guggenheim Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Renaissance Society, Chicago, Stadthaus Ulm, Germany, and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Solo exhibitions of her work have been held at venues such as the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, Gallery Min Min, Tokyo and at the Gallery at Hermes, New York. She is Assistant Professor in Photography at Mason Gross School of the Art at Rutgers University.