

Time Out

New York

Miranda Lichtenstein
Elizabeth Dee Gallery, through Sat
28 (see Chelsea).

In a photograph of an office flooded with white light, a man meditates. There's an iMac on the desk in front of him and a Robert Longo image of a crashing wave on the wall behind. Like Miranda Lichtenstein's other new works at Elizabeth Dee, *The Wave* (2005) explores—and pokes fun at—the ways people in 21st-century America search for spiritual transcendence.

Notably, in Lichtenstein's pictures this journey is always taken in isolation. In *Anechoic Chamber* (2004), a man lies on his back in (according to a gallery statement) an echo-free room that allows him to hear the sounds of his own nervous system. (John Cage composed his famous silent score, *4'33"*, in 1952 after a similar experience.) In *Floater* (2004), an otherwise serenely

minimal study of blue water and white tub, a woman's profile is eerily reflected in an isolation tank. Even the man exhaling cigarette smoke onto a smoldering smudge stick in *Shaman* (2005) is oblivious to the apparently drunken woman seated next to him, her hands folded in prayer.

In the smallest photograph here, a figure seems to levitate in space.

Because the supine body is covered in a gray blanket, it also looks like it is on the way to the morgue; the swoosh of a visible Nike sneaker invokes the Heaven's Gate mass suicide. In the show's only landscape,



Miranda Lichtenstein, Floater, 2004.

Council Ring (2004), Lichtenstein casts an otherworldly light on a 19th-century stone bench installed in a suburban park—it looks ready to be beamed up into outer space.
—Bridget L. Goodbody