

Women in Photography

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Miranda Lichtenstein



9 Planes, 5 Unrealized, 2007 | All images courtesy of the Elizabeth Dee Gallery

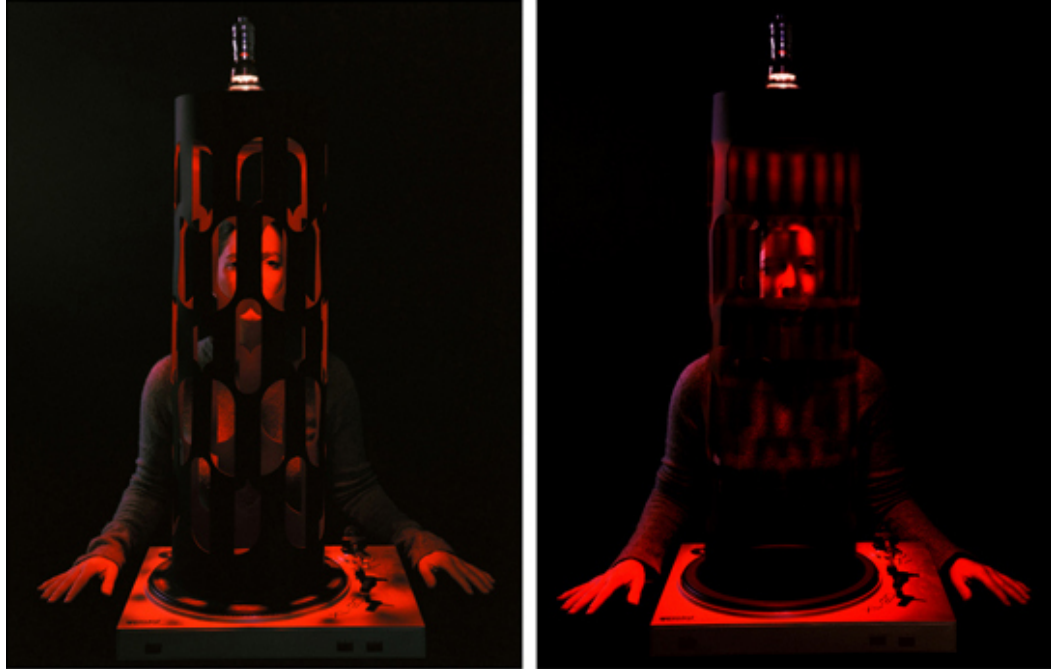
Statement

Searching, misrepresentation, failure, and our troubled relationship to the natural world are components of my work. For this reason, living at Monet's garden on a residency in Giverny a number of years ago had a tremendous impact on me. Recognizing the garden as a giant tableaux staged by a painter, I decided to take the discarded flowers and create still life images in the studio, as a response to the challenge of making an original photograph of the most photographed garden in the world. On my route to the garden, I would pass through the tool shed, which had shadows painted on the wall to designate where each tool should be hung. More often than not, the tools would be hung upon the wrong shadow. It struck me as a perfect example of a failed system. This image prompted me to draw the shadows of flowers and plants clipped in the garden. I started out by photographing the flower against a misaligned shadow drawing, but eventually the shadow drawings grew more elaborate. Because they are made from projected light, they look like a photogram. I view them as a send-up of Henry Fox Talbot's "Pencil of Nature." They appear to be a mirror of the original but are in fact produced by my own hand. Eventually, I ventured back outside of the studio, photographing trees that I then misaligned. The diptychs (Two Trees, After the Storm) refer back to the shadow – a shadow is at once nothing and a double of something.

I usually work on a few projects at once, so at the same time I was working with still subjects, I was making pictures that responded to a trend I'd recognized, of an increasing number of secular outlets

for seekers of the spiritual. I called the project “The Searchers,” and I photographed people in various altered states. For the first time I used myself as a model in my pictures (Untitled (A self-portrait as a member of Heaven’s Gate), Dream Machine, Self-portrait as a Shaman). I wanted to locate my own connection to the desire for a transcendental experience. Recently, I have used photographs of airplanes (9 Planes, 5 Unrealized) to engage my interest in the sublime and failed utopias. Although they deal with the subject of representation, they are also deeply personal.

In 1996 I was in a crash landing and have since only known air travel as an experience of unspeakable fear. The pictures appropriate painted images of airplanes mostly from the 60s and 70s. When I exhibited them, they were shown with the images you see here – misrepresented shadows, fallen trees, and dreamlike quests for enlightenment. They represent a conflict between a fantasy of escape and a loss of control. Sigmar Polke asked: “Does meaning create relationships or do relationships create meaning?” I hope to pose this question and create a task of decoding for the viewer, by showing a broader range of work rather than a single series.



The Dream Machine, 2007



Self-Portrait as a Shaman, 2007

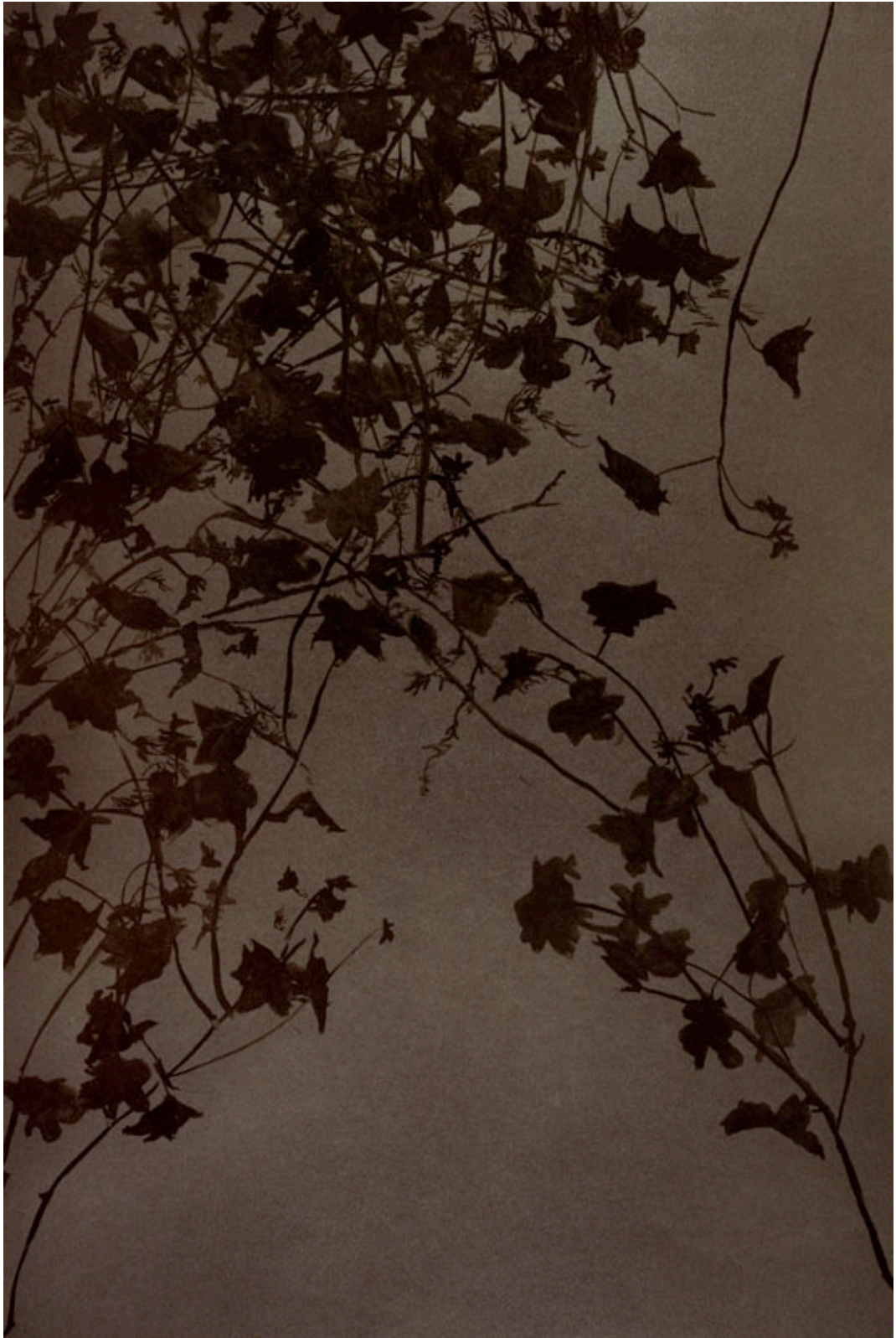


Untitled, 2007





After the Storm (Diptych), 2007



Untitled #1 (Shadow), 2007



Untitled #6 (Shadow), 2007



Untitled #41, 2007



Untitled #43, 2007







Two Tress (Diptych), 2007

Bio

Miranda

Lichtenstein received her MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. She has exhibited in numerous museums and galleries in the U.S. and abroad, including the UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, New York; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; the Renaissance Society, Chicago; the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C; Stadthaus Ulm, Germany; Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York; Gallery Min Min, Tokyo; and Mary Goldman Gallery, Los Angeles. She was a recipient of The Giverny Residency Program and Fellowship, Claude Monet Foundation, Giverny, France. Lichtenstein lives and works in New York. www.elizabethdeegallery.com
