

Schwendener, Martha, "Altered Consciousness in Creative Oases," *The New York Times*, April 17, 2015, p. C30

C30

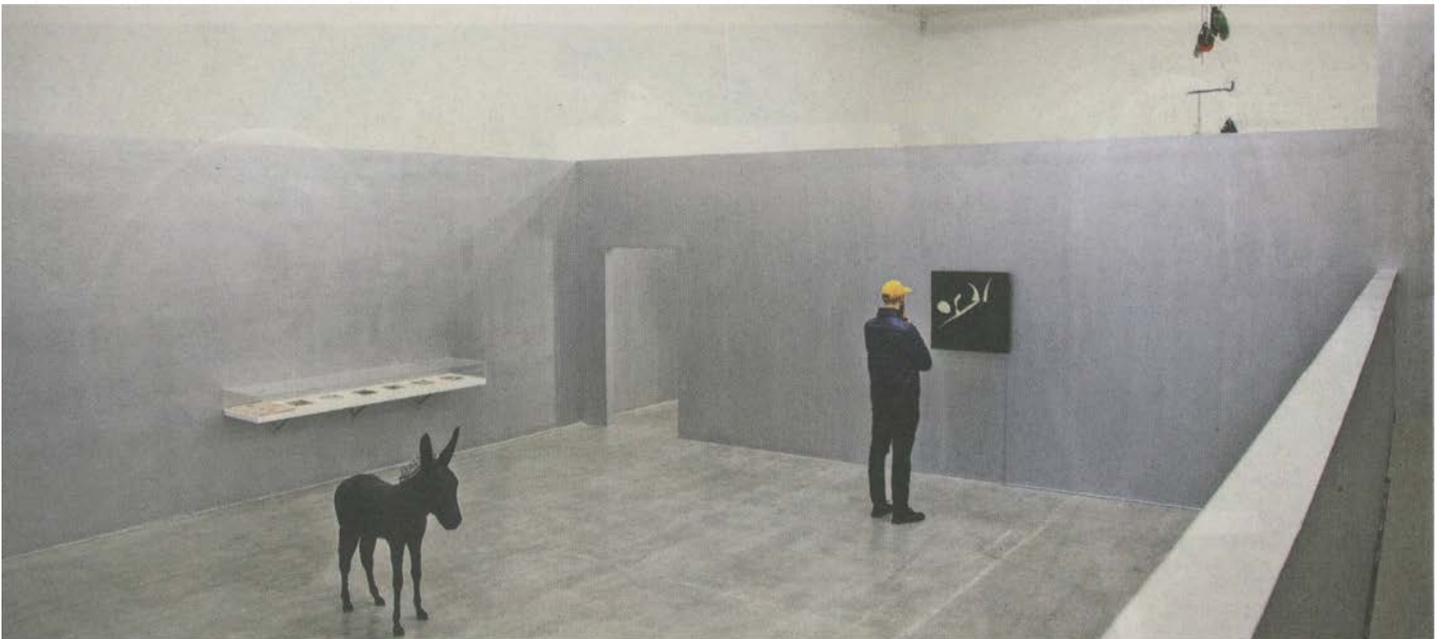
Y

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2015

Galleries of New York: SoHo and TriBeCa

Martha Schwendener

Altered Consciousness in Creative Oases



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAKE NAUGHTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

IN PLAIN SIGHT The show "Work Hard: Selections" by Valentin Carron at the Swiss Institute in SoHo features a kinetic installation, "Peut-être No. 11," by Jean Tinguely, above at right, and "Black Balthazar," by Mai-Thu Perret, above at left. Below left, works by Tracey Snelling, in the show "Feel Big Live Small," at Apexart in TriBeCa. Below right, visitors watching "Liquidity Inc.," by Hito Steyerl, at Artists Space in SoHo. Bottom right, Mercer Street in SoHo.

Schwendener, Martha, "Altered Consciousness in Creative Oases," *The New York Times*, April 17, 2015, p. C30

originate from an absurd but hilarious premise inspired by another artist. At a news conference, Edward Ruscha once revealed that a sculpture titled "Rocky II" had never been shown: Mr. Ruscha had buried it in the Mojave Desert in the 1970s. Following this lead, Mr. Bismuth hired a detective and went into the desert to find the work. The resulting videos feature a cameo by Jeffrey Deitch and the baritone of the conceptual artist Lawrence Weiner, who performed the fake movie trailer for this art caper. (Mr. Bismuth himself shared an Oscar for original screenplay in 2005 with Michel Gondry and Charlie Kaufman for "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind.") At Team's auxiliary space at 47 Wooster Street, a performance series is continuing: The last segment features the great video artist Alex Bag.

SWISS INSTITUTE Cultural institutions devoted to national patrimonies are out of step with today's art world, which argues for global unity (even if that is illusory). But the Swiss Institute, in a space once occupied by Jeffrey Deitch on Wooster Street, is an exceptional case. In "Work Hard," Valentin Carron, who represented Switzerland at the 2013 Venice Biennale, continues to probe the question of "Swiss-ness" with a range of

curious and fabulous objects (in other words, who cares if they are actually Swiss). A small kinetic installation by Jean Tinguely hangs opposite bunny ears carved from wood by Claudia Comte, in the style of Henry Moore; watercolor drawings by the visionary artist Marguerite Burnat-Provins look like gruesome fairy-tale illustrations, while Denis Savary's "Alma (After Kokoschka)" (2007) riffs on the life-size doll that the artist Oskar Kokoschka had made of Alma Mahler after she left him for the architect Walter Gropius. Kokoschka lived with the doll for a year, then beheaded it.

RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS Vitaly Komar is best known for his collaboration with Alexander Melamid, but his exhibition at Feldman, a landmark SoHo gallery, explores his interest in allegory and justice. Paintings of brown bears, symbols of Russian power, and the balancing scales of justice dominate the show. Works from the '80s by Komar and Melamid in the rear gallery prove the artists were in top form when critiquing the Soviet Union and its abuses, particularly against artists. Mr. Komar has lived in New York since 1978, but the Komar and Melamid oeuvre, with its intrepid critiques of totalitarian-