

ART & DESIGN

Review: Mira Dancy's 'Yes'

By **ROBERTA SMITH** JUNE 25, 2015

The title of Mira Dancy's second gallery show in New York is simple and open-ended: "Yes." It reflects an artist giving herself permission to look back to German Expressionism while setting her sights on female nudes who don't have time for the male gaze. She is preceded in different ways by Dana Schutz, Katherine Bernhardt and Ella Kruglyanskaya.

One elongated odalisque spans two walls of the gallery, rendered in shades with ink and brush. Reclining on a beach, she seethes with shadows and independence, a landscape unto herself. Opposite is a similar figure outlined in blue neon with the letters of the show's title across her chest, giving a kind of autonomy to the sign language of topless bars.

Three framed inky works on paper also feature nudes. In "Après Act," one lies in a landscape, looking spent, postcoital. "La Mujer" pares down the wall painting to a few easy lines and a stormy sky. And in "Three Muses Blue," purples and magenta join black to depict three women who could be standing together in a shower, a communal dressing room or backstage in a burlesque club. Theirs is a happy world without men.

Ms. Dancy's apparent goal of reclaiming the female body by borrowing from male artists — Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Matisse and William N. Copley — is smart and full of possibilities. She also has an affinity for landscape (great trees). But so far, she is mainly revving her engines, however fiercely and impressively.

Chapter NY

127 Henry Street, between Rutgers and Allen Streets, Lower East Side

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