

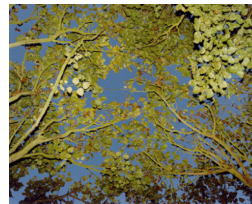
# ARTFORUM

## Miranda Lichtenstein

ELIZABETH DEE GALLERY  
545 West 20th Street  
October 11–November 08

New York  
CRITICS' PICKS

Everyone is familiar with Monet's garden in Giverny, having seen the artist's depictions of it or even visited the site itself, which has been meticulously maintained. Less well-known is the replica of the garden in Kitagawa Village, Japan, a down-at-the-heels tourist attraction where French flowers struggle to survive in the alien climate. In her current show at Elizabeth Dee, Miranda Lichtenstein presents photographs of both places, capturing archetypal imagery—weeping willows, a bridge arching gracefully over a pond—along with behind-the-scenes views of greenhouses and cooling sheds. The tableaux are rendered in Lichtenstein's customary lush, heightened style, but for all the prettiness of her formulations, there's an underlying tension, a suggestion that the act of reshaping nature is fraught with hostility. Beneath the overdetermined layers of cultural association (the Kitagawa garden, for example, offers the spectacle of nineteenth-century French Japonisme recreated in twenty-first-century Japan), there's the intimation of a primal, universal memory—a Garden of Eden, perhaps.



—John Reed

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