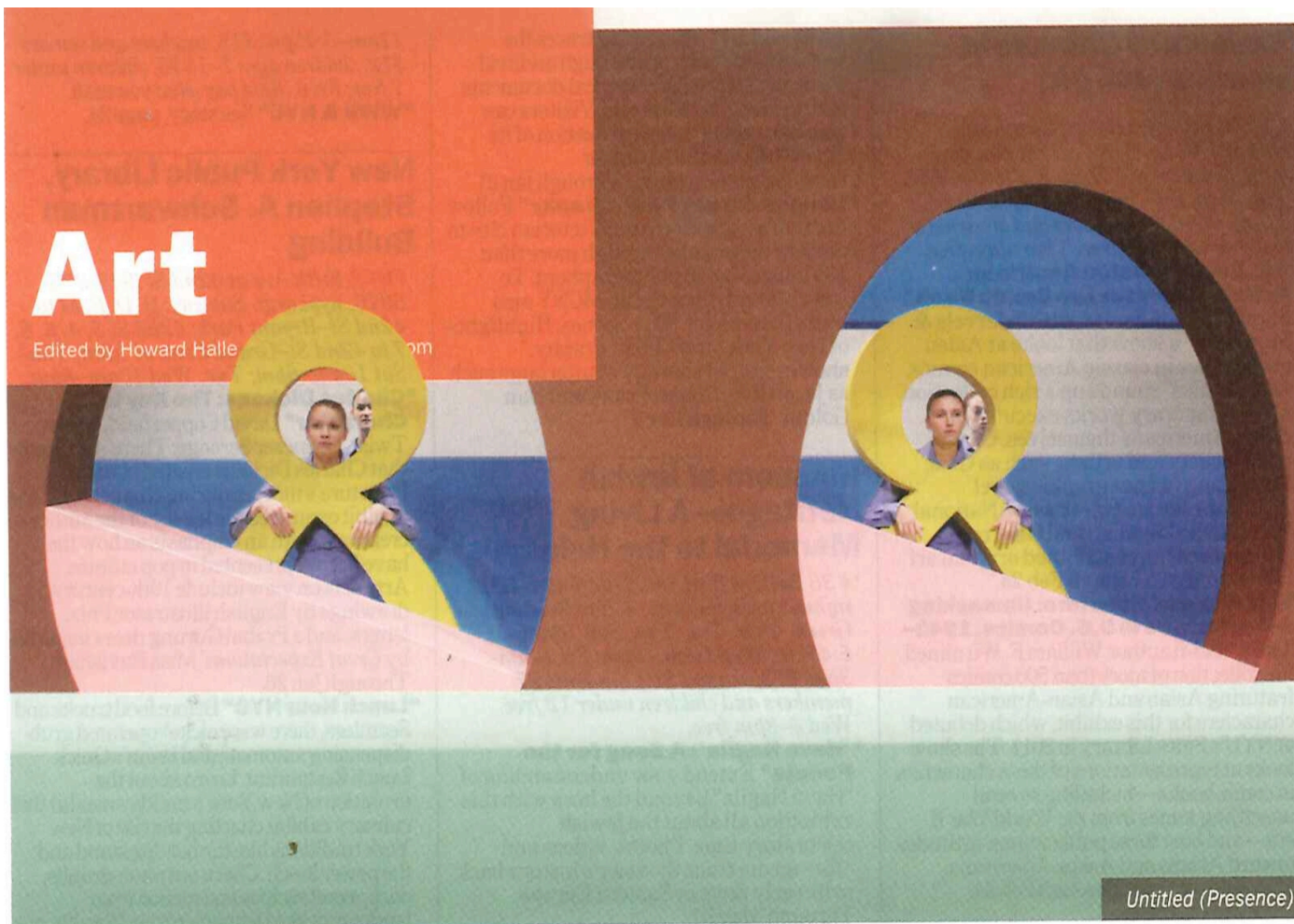


Art

Edited by Howard Halle



Untitled (Presence)

“Elad Lassry, Untitled (Presence)”



The Kitchen, through Oct 20
(see Chelsea)

Two handsome young men meet our gaze with half smiles in one of Elad Lassry’s latest photos, and questions abound. Are they lovers? Brothers? Friends? Sci-fi automatons in their weird matching uniforms? As it turns out, they are dancers, who, along with other professionals from American Ballet Theatre and New York City Ballet, took part in a three-night-only event at the Kitchen orchestrated by Lassry last month. The point of the performance, however, wasn’t movement per se;

rather, it was how representational conventions differ between still and moving images. The results, seductive if somewhat ambiguous, echo through the exhibition here.

Lassry has carefully arranged the work in the gallery within a series of framed viewpoints, starting with a small archway at the entrance, and concluding with a wall topped by wavelike forms that allow glimpses of the photographs beyond. The effect suggests a combination of installation and theater. A film featuring jittery, dancing wooden eggs evokes dancers, hopping *en pointe*. Two photos with mats shaped like quotation marks emphasize that images are, at best,

partial fragments of reality. Old headshots of actors (a sympathetic clown, an overenthusiastic starlet) as well as photos of flowery porcelain are interesting enough, but they lack the tension between the real and represented that gives the portraits of performers their charge.

Lassry’s dance consisted of carefully choreographed moments that seemed too fleeting to fully contemplate, despite repeated gestures meant to slow the pace down. And while his newfound embrace of choreography is certainly fascinating, his photos remain more rewarding.

—Merrily Kerr