

LUXEMBOURG & DAYAN

# The New York Times

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## Art & Design

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### What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week



An installation view of "Melodrama, Act 2," at Luxembourg & Dayan, with Urs Fischer's "Foxtrot," left, and Richard Serra's "Hand Catching Lead."

URS FISCHER, 2016 RICHARD SERRA / ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK, THE CIRCULATING FILM & VIDEO LIBRARY, THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; ANDREW ROMER, LUXEMBOURG & DAYAN

***JULY 28, 2016***

***‘Melodrama, Act 2: New York’***

*Luxembourg & Dayan*

*64 East 77th Street, Manhattan*

*Through Sept. 17*

This sparsely theatrical and uncommonly evocative exhibition consists of three sculptures and a video. At one end of the gallery, two busts on pedestals make up a tableau about creative imagination. One portrays the composer Giuseppe Verdi. Rendered in dark wax over plaster by the Italian sculptor Vincenzo Gemito (1852-1929) in 1873, Verdi is beetle-browed with deep-set eyes, thick hair and a heavy beard, and appears profoundly thoughtful. Looking toward him is “Italian Woman,” a gleaming, stainless-steel, Rococo-style representation of a beautiful woman made by Jeff Koons in 1986. She might be Verdi’s muse. Letters inscribed into the sculpture’s base identify her as Lucia Mondella, a character from an 1827 novel, “The Betrothed” by Alessandro Manzoni, considered one of the great works of Italian literature.

At the gallery’s other end, the subject is hands, the sculptor’s primary tool. Urs Fischer’s “Foxtrot” (2015) has a realistic pair of detached hands resting on the back of a red plastic chair. Next to it, Richard Serra’s three-minute, black-and-white film, “Hand Catching Lead” (1968), loops on a small screen. It shows the artist’s dirty hand repeatedly attempting and usually failing to catch small sheets of lead falling from above.

The second part of a trans-Atlantic production organized by the independent curator Francesco Bonami (“Act 1” is in the gallery’s London space), the exhibition inspires meditation on the archetypal wedding of mind and body out of which all art is born. KEN JOHNSON