into her ear. To the right, there is a shot of a man's feet in bed, a fly sitting on the bottom of one foot. How could he not brush that insect away, unless he's a corpse? Incriminatingly, the woman's earring is visible beneath a sheet.

So it goes with *Orian (Diptych)*, 1980, in which, in the first picture, a young girl juggles balls while a man, in silhouette, lurks in the middle distance. To the right, what would be an innocent shot of an unfinished game of jacks is tainted by the presence of a discarded polka-dotted scarf; it is the same scarf the girl was wearing on the left. The relationship between the images is often tenuous, stretched thin, in many cases involving the recurrence of a single object—a menacing clue that links the two images while only hinting at the nature of the crime. In the left-hand image in *Tennis (Diptych)*, 1976, an individual looks at a woman holding a tennis racket. In the second photo, a woman is slumped in a bathtub; we see the back of her head through the translucent sliding shower door. The tie worn by the man in the left-hand photo is now knotted around a towel rack on the wall and the shower door's handle, seemingly locking her in.

The "woman in peril" appears to be Adams's favorite motif, and, given the dates of the work, it is tempting to see this as an ironic deployment of a generic cultural archetype, a Pictures-era effort to expose a convention's ideological substrate for analysis and critique. (Cindy Sherman was making her "Untitled Film Stills," 1977–80, around the same time.) *Bicycle*, 1977—the only stand-alone image in the show—is shot from behind a curtain of leaves, showing a woman sunbathing alone in a park. All is not well, however, as a sinister hand in the foreground pulls aside a branch. A point-of-view shot, the work seems, on its face, like an attempt to convey the violence of photographic voyeurism by literalizing it, upping the ante by making the viewer obviously complicit in the predatory gaze. Yet the image reads as almost gleeful in its salaciousness. The content is only a ploy to engage us.

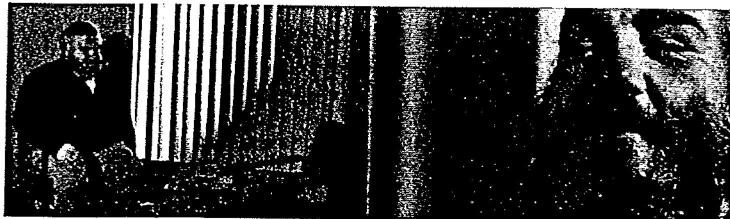
Adams made these "Mysteries" to be looked at as such, and in that way, they explicitly draw a parallel between the viewer and the detective. Such an analogy is misleading, however, for the works—marked by blank spots—always resist deduction and reason. In guiding us along the criminal's trail but leaving the case uncrackable, Adams upends the epistemological promise of the detective story, thwarts the idea that the mystery will be solved. He defers the satisfaction of meaning for the pleasure of speculation.

—*Lloyd Wise*

Meredith Danluck
LESLIE | FRITZ

In *Good News/Bad News* (all works 2013), a two-channel video by Meredith Danluck, fifteen actors answer a telephone. The first channel, projected on one wall, shows the performers reacting to good news, while the second channel, projected on an adjacent wall, shows them reacting to bad. In each iteration, the script is roughly the same: A phone rings, an actor answers it, says "Hello?" and "Yes? Yes! Yes!"—or "No! Oh, no, no, no"—then, "Thank you," and hangs up. After that, another performer appears, and it all happens again.

Meredith Danluck, *Good News/Bad News*, 2013, two-channel HD-video projection, color, sound, 13 minutes 3 seconds.



The scenes take place in an anonymous room. It is dully illuminated by a single lamp and by light weakly filtering through slats of vertical blinds. There's a dresser, an anodyne painting, two chairs flanking an end table, and a telephone. The actors are dressed nicely, even formally. No clues are given about the contents of the phone call (though one woman, deviating slightly from the script with a whispered "I did it!" after her good-news call, seems to have some sort of story in mind). The scenario—with its unknown news and unknown consequences—is almost perfectly, seamlessly free of context, and, by virtue of its repetition, comes to resemble an existential nightmare or Ionesco play. Occasionally, between actors, the camera pans over a clock that's not otherwise visible and always shows the same time.

The actors' differing approaches invite us to anatomize the variations and the samenesses of anticipation and apprehension: One woman flees the room directly after hanging up; a man paces in an agitated manner or hums happily to himself; a child sits eerily still whether the news is good or bad (he seems beamed in from a Stephen King tale). Some of the actors are hammy, others subtle. In one pair of clips, a woman's reactions to the good and bad news are both very slight, in fact nearly indistinguishable. On the opposite end of the emotive spectrum, some actors convey joy and despair with excess; in their cases, too, elation and devastation look similar, bringing to mind the laughing, crying woman of Sam Taylor-Wood's *Hysteria*, 1997. There are multiple fist pumps, mouths covered in disbelief.

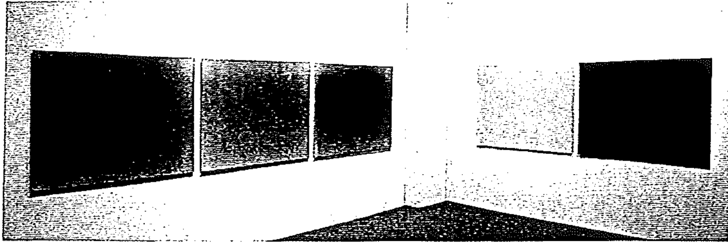
Good News/Bad News is a close cousin of Christian Marclay's *Telephones*, 1995, a supercut of movie clips featuring actors dialing, answering, and talking on phones in all manner of emotional states. If Marclay's work is a taxonomic look at the filmic conventions of that instrument, Danluck shows us the spell those conventions cast. The characters' gestures are often reminiscent of ultrafamiliar tropes—from movies, of course, but also reality television and perhaps (given the fist pumps and the variations on end-zone dancing) sports. This creates a discomforting effect of unreality. These staged reactions are modeled on the reactions of people who have already modeled their reactions on those they've seen on-screen.

Two other looped video works, *Fight Scene* and *Kiss*, tread similar ground of cinematic convention and expectation. In the former, two men take part in a brawl that never reaches any resolution; in the latter, a camera swirls around a man and woman locked in a smooch and then circles each participant kissing digital simulations of him- or herself. Although not as effective as *Good News/Bad News* in inducing a vertiginous lurch between film and life, they remind us of how frequently we cross that gap.

—*Emily Hall*

Julio Grinblatt
MINUS SPACE

In Fluxus event scores, the interpretive freedom invited by a brief and sometimes enigmatic textual composition encourages unexpected outcomes in the work's performance. For example, how does one execute George Brecht's *Word Event • Exit*, 1961, which consists simply of those few units of language printed on a small white card? Julio Grinblatt, an Argentinean artist based in the US, is clearly inspired by both the economy and the indeterminacy of Fluxus instructional works. In his ongoing photographic series "*Cielito Lindo*," 2005–, he invited professional color labs to participate in the creation of the work, exploring the contingency of concepts such as beauty and



View of "Julio Grinblatt," 2013.

truth as they relate to the seemingly concrete indexing operation of photographic reproduction.

The premise for "*Cielito Lindo*" is described on a plain 8½ x 11" sheet of paper that hung on one of the gallery's walls: In 2005, Grinblatt took a picture of a clear and cloudless blue sky; over several years and in several countries, he sent the same negative to different color labs with the request for the "printer to print a beautiful sky" (the phrase *cielito lindo*, which refers to a well-known mariachi song, roughly translates as "lovely sweetheart," though its literal meaning is "little beautiful sky"). Obviously, the apparatus of the camera, with all of its specific technical variables as well as those of its film stock and processing, captures the already ephemeral and changeable events of nature with multifarious results. Grinblatt thematizes how various interventions in printing can also substantially alter the appearance of a work. The seven forty-by-fifty-inch works that were on view (of the innumerable possibilities in the "*Cielito Lindo*" project) are all, at initial glance, blue monochromes. Yet while some works are blanched and pale, others are composed of deeply saturated cobalt and lapis hues. Some prints contain a great deal of visual "noise"—small light flares and streaks that seem like attributes of the sky or perhaps flaws in the negative, or even specks of lint that were blown up in the printing process. Others appear much slicker: *Cielito Lindo #11*, 2013, is a uniformly vibrant electric blue, whereas its neighbor *Cielito Lindo #5*, 2007, contains a faintly visible cerulean circle at its center that gradually fades to a lighter teal toward the edge and lends the work a sapphire-like intensity and variability. The differences in these prints call into question the notion of an "accurate" representation of the sky, which itself is not a thing that can be captured but a complex space of depth and unpredictability. In the exhibition, the works were hung low and surrounded the viewer, giving the sense of picture windows each opening onto a parallel reality.

The inconsistencies among the works are astonishing, given that the images derive from the same negative. This brings to mind Maurice Merleau-Ponty's meditations on color in Cézanne's paintings, on the mutability of a hue seen relationally to another, perceived through the biologically diverse optics of each human's vision, which makes the acts of producing *and* apperceiving a work deeply contingent and variable. Merleau-Ponty called this a process of becoming, in which color, and therefore the work composed of color, is never static or resolved but always dependent on the relationships between parts of the work and between neighboring works and external experiences. To adapt Heraclitus's saying about rivers: In Grinblatt's work, you can never see the same sky twice.

—*Eva Díaz*

Barbara Bloom
JEWISH MUSEUM

This past spring, Barbara Bloom reimagined the installation of five galleries at the Jewish Museum in New York, crafting a suave, literary exhibition that set objects from the institution's holdings in dialogue with her own words and site-specific assemblages. No stranger to working with museum collections, Bloom is well known for her permanent intervention at Vienna's Museum für Angewandte Kunst (MAK) from 1994, for which she placed the institution's display of Thonet bentwood chairs behind a translucent wall, illuminating the objects from behind so they are visible only as shadows. At the Jewish Museum, Bloom subtly echoed her Vienna production. In a section of the show devoted to the theme of synesthesia, thirteen silver containers—ceremonial vessels from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries made for inhaling sweet spices—were similarly backlit, producing decorative shadows on scrims. As Bloom explained in one of several lengthy texts superimposed on book-like spreads in the show, each of these containers was intended as a surrogate for a notable figure, from Ludwig Wittgenstein to Jimi Hendrix, all synesthetes.

In total, the exhibition featured 276 objects arranged by Bloom into thirteen sleek tableaux, many of which referred to the building's previous function as the residence of the prominent German-Jewish couple Felix and Frieda Warburg. In the gallery that once served as the Warburgs' dining room, for instance, Bloom set a table with twelve historical drinking glasses from different countries; these were intended as stand-ins for figures—some nameless—quoted in a wall text. Above the table hung a chandelier, a replica of a light fixture in a 1920 painting by Isidor Kaufmann, which was displayed nearby. Bloom also recreated a mirror from the painting and situated it across the room. The installation sparked a dialogue across time, one partly inspired by the Talmud, particularly the Mishnah and its commentary of rabbinical debates from various centuries, laid out on the page as if all the writers were speaking in the same room at the same time.

In an adjacent gallery, Bloom examined gift giving through the figure of Sigmund Freud. A chaise longue and an armchair-shaped vitrine held a silver cigar box given to Freud by a patient in 1903, a first-century intaglio Roman ring, and a clay model of a couch from 800–700 BC—a donation to the museum and a nod to Freud's vast museum-like collection of antiquities and totems. The texts accompanying these striking pieces were some of the most interesting in the show—quotes, portions of letters, images of Freud, and Bloom's whip-smart interpretive writings serving as an enlightening investigation into a single person and his own, knotty object relations.

Like Fred Wilson and, more recently Trisha Donnelly, Bloom knows how to draw complexity and critical ambiguity from a museum collection. Yet her strongest suit may be her own writing and research: When I asked the museum for a copy all of the texts in the show, I was handed

View of "Barbara Bloom," 2013.