The Cat Show: Purrfect Art For Summer
by Diane Solway

Rita Ackermann With No Roots Behind them I, 1997

Sure James Turrell’s bathed-in-light experience at the Guggenheim is the feel-good show of the summer and Paul McCarthy’s dark twisted fantasy, WS, at the Park Avenue Armory is the season’s boldest romp, but let’s not overlook what for this viewer may be the city’s purrfect art tonic: The Cat Show at White Columns art space, featuring some 130 cat-inspired works by the likes of artists Elizabeth Peyton, Marilyn Minter, David Shrigley, Mike Kelley, Patti Smith, and the art duo Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Conceived and organized by Rhonda Lieberman, the feline fest includes such charmers as an early film by director Gus Van Sant of a cat chasing a light, Cory Arcangel’s video of a keyboard playing cat, and a bust of an Italian food critic made of edible glue and catnip. (The critic had recommended a cat stew dish; revenge is a dish best served with catnip.)

On Fridays and Saturdays, real kitties from Social Tees Animal Rescue are on hand for adoption. You’ll find them romping in the habitat designed by the architects Gia Wolff and Freecell. The whimsical jungle gym has a Zen garden litter box by Rob Pruitt, a modernist cat house by Sam Roeck, and a scratching post by Joe Scanlan upholstered in, yes, Gerhard Richter-designed carpeting.