

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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## The New York Times

# What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in June

By **Will Heinrich, Holland Cotter and Yinka Elujoba**

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*This week in Newly Reviewed, Will Heinrich covers Pat Oleszko's sassy inflatables, Charles Ray's new white-on-white sculptures and Lauren dela Roche's "No Man's Land."*

## Charles Ray

Through June 29. Matthew Marks Gallery, 522 West 22nd Street, Manhattan; 212-243-0200; [matthewmarks.com](http://matthewmarks.com).



Charles Ray's "Two dead guys," 2023. Charles Ray, via Matthew Marks Gallery

Charles Ray is very good at white. He's also good at silver, gray, variations of scale, excess and precision. But the three sculptures in this unfathomably elegant show — a 24-inch crashed car made of cut Japanese paper, a blurry nine-foot-tall, cast-paper-pulp woman, and two naked marble men lying on a slab — are all bright, bleached white.

Whiteness of this kind offers all sorts of classical and scientific connotations for Ray to leverage and distort. And the pieces certainly have the undercurrent of horror that Herman Melville diagnosed in the "Whiteness of the Whale" chapter of "Moby-Dick," in part because in a white-cube gallery they mess with your sense of where the walls are. But mainly what struck me about them was how many subtleties of light and texture they let me see, particularly on "Two dead guys."

The surfaces of these two supine, naked, machined, slightly larger-than-life men have been sanded but not polished. Fine gray impurities floating just under the surface become freckles or veins, and if you lean in close, you can sometimes see fingerprint-like grooves. The men's faintly protruding nipples, catching the light differently than their smooth chests, were only just discernible. And as I crouched down to examine the sole of one foot, I discovered a minuscule bright red dot. Before I could notify the attendant, the dot began to move: It was a spider that must have fallen from someone's jacket or crawled up from the floor. I wouldn't have noticed it anywhere else.