

# artcritical

the online magazine of art and ideas

## ARTCRITICAL PICK:

Tom Wesselmann at Mitchell-Innes & Nash



I'd basically written Tom Wesselmann off as merely a prurient artist of T&A spectacle. Although his retrospective survey now at Mitchell-Innes & Nash hasn't totally won me over, it is amazing to see him more fully represented. His relief works are startling, and give a deeper appreciation to his association with Pop art. In particular, works such as *Interior No. 2* (1964) and *Landscape #5* (1965), in which the landscape is less about a depicted territory (which is just a green-and-blue pastoral horizon), and more about a VW Beetle. Call it the era's cultural landscape, I suppose. The almost-Color Field-flat background is rendered on two panels placed on the floor, against the wall. In front of them stands the red Bug, on a panel of its own, rendered in the photorealism of mid-century advertising — deep rouge and polished chrome. This seems, to me, a more accessible (and non-chauvinist) depiction of desire and media, and I'm more sympathetic to Wesselmann's *oeuvre* because of it. I would have never guessed. NOAH DILLON

Tom Wesselmann, *Landscape #5*, 1965. Oil on canvas and Liquitex and collage on canvas, 84 x 144 1/2 x 18 inches. Courtesy of the artist's estate and Mitchell-Innes & Nash.

"Tom Wesselmann" continues at Mitchell-Innes & Nash through May 28, 534 W 26th Street (between 10th and 11th avenues), New York, 212 744 7400