

PRICE \$4.99

THE NEW YORKER

FEB. 9 & 16, 2009

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3600)—“Alexander Calder: The Paris Years, 1926-1933.” Through Feb. 15. ♦ “Alex Bag.” Mister Rogers has left the neighborhood. Bag makes her solo museum début with a video—a beyond inappropriate children’s television show—that combines original footage with excerpts from “The Patchwork Family,” a kooky syndicated program that her mother hosted in the seventies. Bag reads aloud from Sartre’s “Nausea” to an audience of uncomprehending tots; a tattooed and strung-out-looking troubadour croons David Bowie and Neil Young. At one point, the artist confesses to a dragon puppet (part Puff the Magic Dragon, part Triumph the Insult Comic Dog), “My shrink says I need to reach a certain state of panic before I can get things done.” Bag puts a hilariously perverse spin on the parodic tradition of performance-based video—her piece is to “Sesame Street” as Martha Rosler’s “Semiotics of the Kitchen” is to “The Martha Stewart Show.” Through April 30. ♦ “Elad Lassry: Three Films.” Through April 30. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)