

## **The New Yorker October 7, 2011**

### **Goings on About Town: Art – Mickalene Thomas**

Thomas shows some one hundred photographs and photocollages in a terrific installation that highlights her working process. Some of these small-scale pieces are the basis of much larger paintings, but nearly all of them involve her now familiar conflation of seventies blaxploitation and art-historical themes: Foxy Brown meets Cleopatra Jones for a picnic on the grass. The cut-and-paste style pays homage to both Romare Bearden and Matisse, and a recent residency at Giverny results in vibrant neo-Cubist interpretations of Monet's home and gardens. But several dark-chocolate-toned Polaroid portraits of bare-breasted African-American women, and one of two female nudes entwined in bed, reclaim another, often exploitative tradition with audacious authority.