

Art in America



Jutta Koether

at Bortolami,
through Jun. 6
520 West 20th Street

Jutta Koether's celebrated contribution to the 2012 Whitney Biennial was a group of paintings based on Poussin's *The Four Seasons* (1660-64). Her new works are also concerned with cycles of change and transformation, taking the wheel of fortune as a guiding metaphor. Rendered with what seem like sketchy, frantic brushstrokes of pink and orange against white grounds, the six works on view appear to be in a process of becoming. Circles and checkerboard grids repeat throughout the series, linking the diverse figurative imagery that Koether has drawn from contemporary news photographs as well as paintings by artists including Francis Bacon, Balthus and Piero della Francesca. A text accompanying the exhibition explicates (or complicates) the works' allegorical meanings. One diptych shows a grounded A380 airplane that is described as "morphing into a creaturely body." Indeed, this "creaturely" aspect remains a prevailing force within Koether's historically minded practice.