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artcritical

ARMORY WEEK PICK OF THE DAY: Barry Le Va at The Art Show

By David Cohen

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Barry Le Va, *Switch*, 1967/2016. Various materials, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the Artist and David Nolan Gallery

In a juxtaposition worthy of the most penetrating and scholarly curated exhibition, but in fact thrown up by the invisible hand of the market, one can stand in an aisle at the Park Avenue Armory this weekend and see Cheim and Read's tastefully sparse installation of three stack paintings by Ron Gorchov, an idiom that tests painting's boundary with sculpture, out of one eye and a Barry Le Va floor piece at David Nolan out of the other. It would be hard to say what boundaries Le Va *isn't* testing: a pioneer of what would come to be labeled post-minimalism and process art before those terms were in circulation, his random scatterings of fragments of felt, ball bearings and bales of fabric amidst sleek linear elements in mirrored metal were described in the pages of ARTForum by Jane Livingstone as "distributional sculpture," a term that didn't quite make it to the canon of art jargon. Le Va's piece, planned in his studio in 1967, is enjoying its first realization in 2016.