

Art in America

EXHIBITIONS THE LOOKOUT



Lorraine O'Grady

at Alexander Gray,
through Jun. 27
510 West 26th Street

The Woman in Red Starts Painting the Stove Her Own Color. This statement, simple, declarative, both direct and of a dreamlike logic, is the title of one of the 50 or so photographs on view in Lorraine O'Grady's exhibition at Alexander Gray. The photographs document *Rivers, First Draft*, a performance staged around a stream in a wooded northern section of Central Park in 1982, toward the start of her career. The performance was a kind of surreal bildungsroman, in which figures representing O'Grady at particular stages of her life contend with various archetypal characters. The abovementioned photograph shows a key moment in our protagonist's development—a moment at which, rejected by her peers, she begins finding her own manner of expression. The exhibition also includes a series of poetic collages constructed from *New York Times* headlines and advertising copy. These pieces, from 1977, provide another opportunity to see O'Grady (formerly an intelligence officer and a rock critic) learning to create a personal language amid the noise of the world.

Pictured: Lorraine O'Grady: *Rivers, First Draft: The stove becomes more and more red*, 1982/2105, digital C-print, 16 by 20 inches.

Courtesy Alexander Gray Associates, New York © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.