

Virgil Marti
Elizabeth Dee Gallery,
through Nov 13 (See Chelsea).

Viewers who thought Virgil Marti's *Grow Room* (2002–04)—a Mylar-papered funhouse that put a psychedelic spin on Whistler's *Peacock Room* (1877)—was a high point of the Whitney Biennial will appreciate his latest homage to the decadent glamour of interior design. He doses early-20th-century decorative arts with a 1970s counterculture sensibility at Elizabeth Dee Gallery.

Louis Comfort Tiffany invented "turtleback" tiles for use in his lamps of the early 1900s. Marti revamps the form, creating huge wall sconces from white foam replicas of tortoise shells. Each is lined with a mirrored sunburst (think Louis XIV meets disco ball) and holds an illuminated metal fixture in the shape of a flower-tipped cactus. The titles invoke Marti's favorite '70s things: *Sconce (Electric Blue Apogee)*

(2004), for example, is named after his high-school bong.

"Classic with a Twist" is the motto of men's clothing designer Paul Smith, and it aptly describes Marti's wallpaper installation *The Moon* (2004), as well as the sculpture *Ode on a Paul Smith Bag* (2004); the multicolored stripes of the designer's iconic shopping bag is central to both works. In the M.C. Escher-like graphic of *The Moon*, squares of the pattern are interspersed with photos of the moon's surface (perhaps taken during the early Apollo landings). The stripes recur in *Ode's* three-foot "candle" (what looks like wax is in fact cast rubber). It burns a leather-scented candle in its center, making the gallery smell like an Hermès store. While Marti toys with conspicuous consumption from previous eras in the sconces, here he also evokes our own 21st-century extravagance.

—Bridget L. Goodbody



Virgil Marti, installation view.