Yoko Ono and Claire Tabouret

FRENCH ACADEMY OF ROME, VILLA MEDICI
Viale della Trinità dei Monti, 1
May 6–July 31

From the entrance of the Villa Medici, throughout its rooms, and even through its outdoor space, an extended juxtaposition of installation works by Yoko Ono and paintings by French artist Claire Tabouret leads viewers along a complex path. The show creates a dialogue between Tabouret's new paintings of female figures—with watery backgrounds and energetic, gestural strokes—and Ono's conceptual, participatory works. Ono's video *SKY TV*, 1966–2017, consisting of thirty screens showing live transmissions of Rome's skies—sets the stage for a counterpoint between her *Painting to be Stepped On*, 1960–2017, a black canvas stretched out on the floor, and Tabouret's *Sitting*, 2016, a large portrait with multiple subjects that evokes the power of a gathered group. On the wall behind a grand staircase, visitors see eleven verbs on a canvas (Ono's *Word Painting*, 2007) then soon encounter Tabouret's *Makeup*, 2016, a grouping of staggered portraits of moody women, their faces slathered in cosmetics. These images

Claire Tabouret, *Sitting***, 2016** acrylic on canvas, 90 1/2 x 118".

are punctuated by the rails and rungs of thirteen wooden ladders in Ono's *Skyladders*, 1992–2017. The exhibition culminates in Ono's iconic video *Freedom*, 1970, which shows the young artist tearing off her bra in a gesture of emancipation from social constrictions. In a nearby room, another dialogue emerges: Tabouret's painting *The Team*, 2016—in which seven women are bound together with bandages (and the picture plane)—serves as a backdrop to Ono's famous *Wrapped Chair*, 1966–2017, swathed in strips of gauze. The face-off between the artists itself seems to echo in a central work in the gardens: Ono's *Play It By Trust*, 1966–2017, a large-scale chessboard that the artist created as a metaphor for the need for peace and the fruitlessness of conflict.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

— *Maria Chiara Valacchi*