

and cast fruits, suggesting rustic Hans Arp works, or sit propped on wheellike geodes; elsewhere, she arranges cobblestones and coloured rocks into querulous faux cemeteries, and the results – ‘denizens of alternative worlds located somewhere between the real and the fantastic’, says the Guggenheim – have an ethereal charm that descends from multivalence. Here, clay-based sculptures refer to Tarsila do Amaral’s 1929 painting *Sol Poente*, with the modernist painter’s view of a tree trunk transforming into cucumbers and swans’ and dinosaurs’ necks. In other words, they’re archetypal Verzutti: funny, sociable, sometimes sexualised, ominous and timeless-feeling due to their use of classical materials and natural forms, and yet, within contemporary art, a new wrinkle.

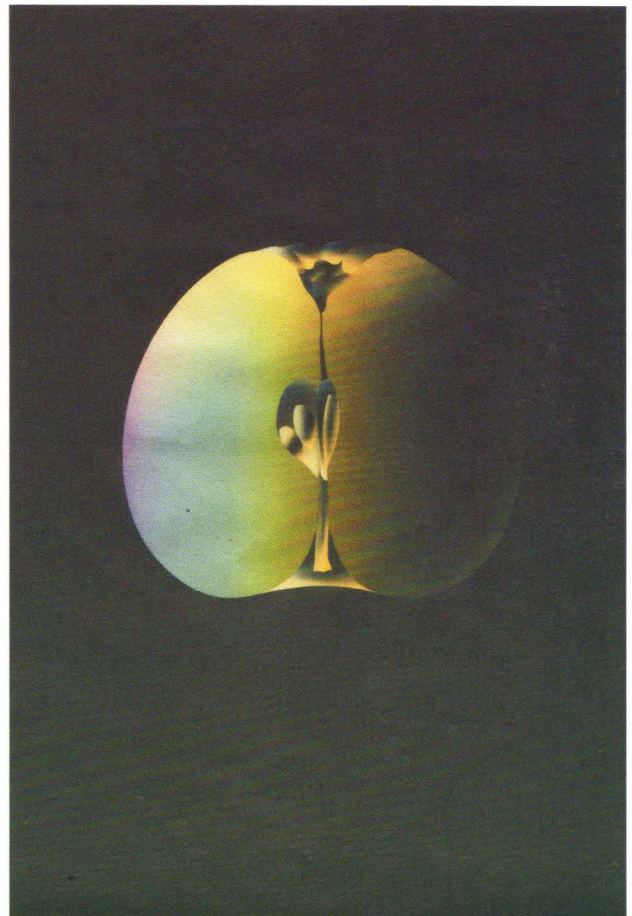
Staying with the funerary, Ho Chi Minh City-based trio **The Propeller Group** – formed in

2006, operating as a fake media agency, sending out deliberately garbled brand messages while exploring the concerns of contemporary Vietnam – here returns to New York, where for the 2012 New Museum Triennial they hired an ad agency to market communist ideas as filtered through capitalism. ‘We like to let ourselves get ingested into the bellies of big social beasts such as television, advertising, or the various manifestations of pop-culture,’ they’ve written. For the 21-minute film *The Living Need Light, The Dead Need Music* (2014), set to show at James Cohan, they return to contemporary Vietnam, the country’s tradition of spectacular funeral processions and specifically a wake lasting several days: we encounter street performers, brass bands, mediums and ‘professional criers’ through a classily shot, wrong-footing mix of fluent documentary and reenactment, reality and illusion.

We’re not foolish enough to end this column with **Marco Basta** just because his name means ‘enough’ in Italian: it’s a total coincidence. Anyway, in his mixed-media solo show *Green, Blue and You*, the rising thirty-year-old Milanese looks likely to continue his already-established scenography of restrained gestures, in which isolated forms and specific tints – orchids, hands, feet, solitary doughnuts, often inked on warmly yellowed paper – associate with discrete emotional states. In this case, underwritten by colour associations with tranquillity and melancholy, some works allude to the containing form of vases; glazed ceramic sheets offer hints of a landscape; and a circular neon suggests antique lace embroidery. It might not sound like much, but because Basta understands the weight of restraint and the orchestration of mood, it’s enough. *Martin Herbert*



9 The Propeller Group, *The Living Need Light, The Dead Need Music* (still), 2014, video, 21 min 15 sec. © the artists. Courtesy James Cohan, New York



10 Marco Basta, *Cosmic Apple*, 2015, inkjet print on Japanese paper, 32 × 21 cm. Courtesy Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Milan