

# carla

Issue 20



# Letter From the Editor

Six-odd weeks into quarantine, so many things feel in stasis. For a moment, we thought this issue would be too. This is the 20th issue of *Carla*, marking five years of the magazine—a milestone for our involvement in Los Angeles. We were planning a big party with lots of hugs and cheers—plans that now feel distant and unattainable. Since our magazine is funded primarily through advertising from our local art community, it became clear that producing a print issue during this time of crisis was simply not feasible. We are beholden to the community, and the magazine is wholly reliant on a fluctuating art economy—one that has been hit with unprecedented financial and physical challenges. At first, we planned to put this issue on hold, and wait until things were back to “normal.” But as we all have experienced, normal is a moving target, and the “normal” we return to on the other side won’t be quite the same as the one before.

So, I accepted that this strange, tenuous time is our five-year anniversary. Why not celebrate it as such? We are all here, together—inventing the future as we review the past. When we look back, this issue will mark something more potent than simply five years of *Carla*: it will be a mark of time when we were all together, but strangely alone.

In this issue, we trace the lineage of *Carla* alongside the changing fabric of the Los Angeles art scene, remembering the shows and moments that shaped our coverage. In place of ads, we have included a gallery viewing room, offering space and visibility to some of the

hundreds of exhibitions across Los Angeles that have been postponed indefinitely or canceled.

All of the essays and reviews included in this issue were written in quarantine (featuring shows our writers were lucky enough to squeak into before the stay-at-home order). Travis Diehl profiles Gala Porras-Kim, looking at her nuanced art practice that questions how we categorize the objects around us. Now confined to our homes and neighborhoods, this inquiry into classification takes on a different resonance. Catherine Wagley delves into *New Images of Man*—both the original exhibition and the redux. In each, attempts to mirror or create an inclusive picture of the human condition proved difficult—humanity is broad, unwieldy, and resistant to a neat thesis. Aaron Horst has been walking, and writes about how his focused attention while ambling through his neighborhood leads to contemplation of artworks, memories, and reflections on the city. Jessica Simmons looks at pandemics of the past and how artists have found creative solutions throughout some of civilization’s darkest days. While hindsight helps us make sense of past trauma and see glimmers of hope in the cultural shifts that followed, we are still in the midst of COVID-19 and without the luxury of distance.

Amidst our current uncertainty, *Carla* is here to support our community, ready to adapt and creatively problem-solve with all of you. As we celebrate our last five years, join us in charting the next ones: together we can build the L.A. that we want to see—one that is diverse, spirited, and always moving forward. We remain committed to offering our coverage for free, and if you are in a position to do so, we ask that you **[consider supporting us](#)** with a donation. We remain ready to do the work.

Sending our deepest love and gratitude to each of you,

Lindsay Preston Zappas  
Founder & Editor-in-Chief

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**Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles**

is a quarterly magazine, online art journal, and podcast committed to being an active source for critical dialogue in and around Los Angeles' art community. *Carla* acts as a centralized space for art writing that is bold, honest, approachable, and focused on the here and now.

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Deana Lawson, *Coulson Family* (2008). Pigment print, 33 x 43 x 1.5 inches framed. Edition 1 of 6. © Deana Lawson. Image courtesy of the artist, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York, and Rhonda Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.

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# Spiritual Coroner: Gala Porras-Kim

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It was raining in Nebraska. Through the phone, I could hear her car's wipers marking time as Gala Porras-Kim drove back to Los Angeles from Cambridge, where she'd been a Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard. Her residency had been cut short by COVID-19. There had been time, though, to develop a new project based on the collection at the university's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Certain of these objects included those dredged from the Cenote Sagrado at Chichén Itzá—a giant natural pool surrounded by steep cliffs in Mexico's northern Yucatán Peninsula—by an American diplomat in the early 20th century. "In [his] letters that I was looking at in the archive," Porras-Kim explained, "there's all of these references to rain. For example, 'It was raining so hard that we couldn't actually get anything today,' or like, 'Sorry, my handwriting is so bad because the water is destroying my hands.'" On other letters, the weather had splattered and melted the ink. Thus, even the colonial archive has its poetry: the cenote was the site for Mayan rituals—sacrifices of jade and gold, pottery, and other ritual objects, as well as human beings, to Chaac, the god of rain.

The story of how many of these objects came to be at the Peabody at Harvard is one of legal sleight of hand. Although the contents of man-made structures like pyramids were protected by the state, the diplomat argued that if he purchased land in Mexico, he would own whatever artifacts were buried underground or in natural formations, including what remained in the

cenote. (He also smuggled hundreds of objects into the United States in official diplomatic bags.)

The original purpose of such objects is one thing; another is the shape of law, of policy, and the way objects are classified. Porras-Kim sees both aesthetic and legal conventions as almost sculptural parameters that structure the lives of the objects themselves. Her work puts pressure on these systems of classification, conservation, display, and knowledge—the contradictions that arise are already present in museum collections. Porras-Kim doesn't answer these questions so much as push them into the exhibition space; a playful, open-ended revisionism ensues.

Take her project for the 2016 edition of *Made in L.A.* at the Hammer Museum, for which the artist selected and displayed a range of objects from the Fowler Museum's anthropological archive that remain unclassified: artifacts in limbo between their original purpose and their inclusion in any potential future encyclopedic context. Animal parts, pottery shards, and textile fragments appeared on blue cloth on a long white pedestal, often accompanied by the Fowler's own terse, sometimes baffled notes. In 2017, Porras-Kim gave a similar treatment to LACMA's Proctor Stafford collection, a group of ceramics classified broadly as "west Mexican." Because the museum is strictly an art museum, the ceramics are somewhat arbitrarily considered not archaeological or religious objects but works of art. The artist gave them another kind of bureaucratic shorthand, separating them into three groups based on the modern Mexican states where they were found (Jalisco, Colima, and Nayarit). She then drew the objects arranged by size, adding another layer of arbitrary categorization. The subjectivity of her own classifications is part of the point. "Maybe I should have talked about latitude and longitude," she said. "Maybe I can write in the directions that the piece gets renamed whenever the state gets called something else." The goal is not revisionism in an accurate, definitive sense, but





Gala Porras-Kim, *31 west Mexico ceramics from LACMA collection: Jalisco Index* (2017). Graphite, colored pencil, marker, ink on paper, artist's frame, 73 x 73 x 3 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council. Photo: Ruben Diaz.

rather a revision of a certain declarative authority to include the beautiful fact that there are things we do not, and will never, know.

At times, Porras-Kim seems to revel in the unfixity and shortfalls of our systems of knowledge. For her recent project for the 2019 Whitney Biennial, Porras-Kim addressed La Mojarra Stela 1, a glyph-covered Mesoamerican monolith that was discovered in a river in Veracruz, Mexico in 1986 and, so far, remains completely untranslated. In lieu of a linguistic, syntactic understanding of the carved text, Porras-Kim offered three alternative ways to make meaning from the mute stone. In the first, she performed an idiosyncratic, formal analysis, using color-coded transparencies to separate the markings by shape: circles, squares, squiggles. In the next, a replica of La Mojarra Stela 1 was attached to a panel covered in graphite marks, as if regarding itself in an obsidian mirror. And in the third, titled *La Mojarra Stela incidental conjugations* (2019), a drawing of the glyphs arranged in written order was accompanied by a rotating, water-filled disc containing plastic cutouts of the same symbols; as they tumbled, the two layers of glyphs aligned, or not, in meaningful ways—or not. The piece may seem like a parody of the self-serious discipline of anthropology. Indeed, especially at first glance, it shares some of the didactic qualities of the systems it critiques. This ambivalence would make for odd science but is completely appropriate for a work of contemporary art. Porras-Kim embraces the unknowable unknowns of anthropology as the formal unknowns of an artistic method of making meaning.

Porras-Kim's interventions also refract the concerns of contemporary collections and museums. Part of her objective, she told me, is to challenge museums to live up to their missions. This is especially vital when a museum deals with living artists, as is the case with her recent project at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA). "All the museums, they all have different personalities," she said.

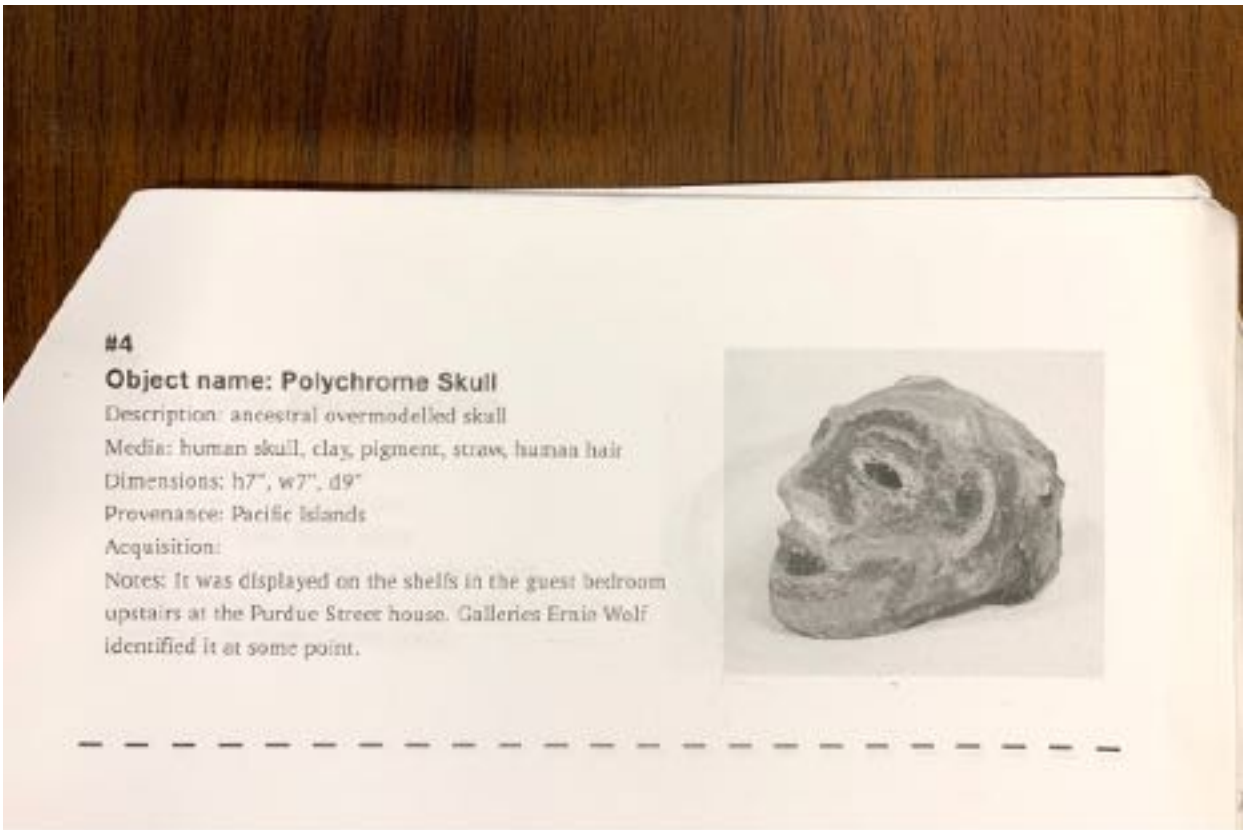
"MOCA is supposed to be 'The Artist's Museum.'" (It was founded by artists in 1979.) "I wanted to know, how much agency do actual artists have over their work in the collection?" The project she organized at MOCA, which was originally scheduled to be on view through mid-May, is part of a series called *Open House*, in which the museum invites artists to guest-curate exhibitions from its vaults. Her approach shines light on the peculiar exigencies of maintaining and displaying artwork that, unlike looted pre-Columbian gold, comes to a museum collection with the artist's directions. Some conservation issues, such as how to preserve the cellophane cigarette packages in a work by Chris Burden or the rotting polyurethane in a work by John Chamberlain, seem like provocations from the artists themselves. Others are semantically tedious, like a single, spare pink fluorescent bulb for a Flavin piece—installed at MOCA in a non-Flavin fixture with the caveat that it is, emphatically, not a work of art. Porras-Kim imagines the project as a conversation with the museum staff, an expression of their anxieties over applying best practices to such indeterminate objects. She mentioned an idea for a future piece that she would address to "an audience of one," a conservator, working to preserve her imagined artwork a thousand years from now.

Art is a long game, as they say, and a lot can change in a millennium. Porras-Kim pointed out that laws and religions and cultural distinctions (between anthropology and art, say) draw their efficacy from belief: they are, in some sense, forms of consensus reality. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the case of human remains. In 2017, she took part in a project called the Berman Board, with fellow artists Fiona Connor, Neil Doshi, and Michala Paludan. Connor had been gifted a handful of objects from a range of cultures, assembled haphazardly by an amateur collector and displayed for decades in his home. For their collaboration, Porras-Kim focused on one piece in particular: a decorated,





*Made in L.A. 2016: a, the, though, only* (installation view)  
(2016). Image courtesy of the artist and the Hammer  
Museum, Los Angeles. Photo: Brian Forrester.



Top: Gala Porras-Kim, *Whitney Biennial 2019* (installation view). From left to right: *La Mojarra Stela and its shapes*; *La Mojarra Stela negative space*; *La Mojarra Stela illuminated text*, and *La Mojarra Stela incidental conjugations* (all works 2019). Image courtesy of the artist and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Photo: Ron Amstutz

Bottom: Gala Porras-Kim, *Polychrome skull possible futures* (2019). Image courtesy of the artist and the Berman Board.



Gala Porras-Kim, *Polychrome skull possible futures* (2019). Image courtesy of the artist and Armory Center for the Arts. Photo: Ian Byers-Gamber.



shrunken head. “I had this head,” she told me. “What could I actually do with it?” First, she called a coroner. “And then the coroner was like, ‘is it a victim of a crime?’ And I said, ‘possibly, yes.’ Because you know, probably it was. And then they said I had to call the police.”

Repatriation is an especially complex problem since the movement of cultural artifacts crisscrosses national, spiritual, legal, and museological lines—not to mention the temporal limit of the human lifespan—and puts those jurisdictions into direct conflict. When Porras-Kim explained that it was a shrunken head, not fresh remains—classified as an object, not a person—she was directed instead to a research museum. This bureaucratic exercise resulted in a handful of documents in file folders in which Porras-Kim detailed a number of possible options for burying, repatriating, or otherwise placing the head. She hopes to make future investigations on a larger scale about remains in museum collections in Brazil and South Korea. In some sense, repatriation of looted remains can never be properly, fully accomplished. Time has moved on, and the folks who should be consulted are dead or missing. But there are other, less official, more artistic solutions. The goal, said Porras-Kim, is “basically to try and figure out how to contact the afterlife,” and ask the dead “where they would rather be, other than in the museum.” (I offered that part of the difficulty is that you can’t just call up the spiritual coroner. She replied, “Oh, yes you can.”)

As for the Peabody’s collection of objects from the Cenote Sagrado, Porras-Kim is planning another artfully incomplete denouement. Originally, she wanted to return the objects to the cenote—the idea was to argue that the rain god Chaac still owned them, and to litigate on his behalf using both spiritual and material laws. Now, she imagines a symbolic repatriation: maybe, said the artist, she will make copies, possibly out of ice. As they melt, the repatriation will be both artistic, a metaphor, and meteorological,

a physical intervention in the water cycle. Viewers will watch as Chaac’s objects return to the rain from whence they came.

Travis Diehl has lived in Los Angeles since 2009. He is a recipient of the Creative Capital / Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant (2013) and the Rabkin Prize in Visual Art Journalism (2018).



Gala Porras-Kim, *Three joined acrobats vessel* (2017).  
Graphite, flashe point on paper, artist's frame,  
25.75 x 18.5 x 1.5 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and  
Commonwealth and Council. Photo: Ruben Diaz.

# New New Images of Man

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It was late, and five of us were on a Zoom happy hour call that had already lasted over four hours—a length of time that would not have seemed excessive if we were all together in a living room, but now, in this quarantine era of endless screen time, felt indulgent. We were questioning our work in the arts when one friend passionately asserted that art was “the most important thing right now.” Art is about human experience, introspection, and empathy, she said, all things we need. We had all been drinking, but the rest of us were still too sober to lean into her optimism: yes, there is always a need for reflection and expression, yet even performance artists are making face masks for health workers right now while curators are hounding city council about eviction protections. The human condition itself seems, currently, more urgent than anything art can say about it, which is why it is especially challenging, in this moment, to make sense of *New Images of Man*, a just-closed exhibition at Blum & Poe that strove to explore humanist struggle.

Curated by Alison M. Gingeras, *New Images of Man* reimagined a former, now-iconic, though never broadly liked exhibition: 1959’s *New Images of Man*, organized by longtime MoMA curator Peter Selz. Selz’s show included 23 artists, all of them white and from the U.S. or Western or Central Europe. Twenty-two of them were male. According to what he said at the time, Selz wanted to demonstrate the many ways in which postwar artists were taking “the human predicament” into consideration, a goal that was very much as unspecific as it sounds. In deliberate contrast, Gingeras pulled together a more international,

intergenerational, and diverse group of 43 artists, bringing some from the original show into conversation with artists who could have been. In addition, she looped in artists living and working now—who are both still concerned with “the human predicament” and also aesthetically influenced by the original show’s artists. Her vision, according to the gallery press release, was to expand the range and “thus more acutely [enact] the original curator’s vision.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, by correcting Selz’s tunnel vision, the show could present a much more alive and open-minded exhibition about the human condition in art. As historical revisionism, (new) *New Images* succeeded in showing how much more the original could have done if the art establishment, and Selz as its agent, looked beyond its own circle. But as a look into how art speaks to human trials and tribulations from today’s vantage, it still felt limited by the shadow of Selz’s show, once again leaning on the art establishment—which is certainly more diverse than it was in 1959, but still not diverse enough.

Peter Selz died in summer 2019 at age 100. His daughter Gabrielle, interviewed for his *New York Times* obituary, observed, “He would say that everything—a somber painting by Rothko or a Rodin sculpture—was about the human condition. My dad responded to emotion.”<sup>2</sup> This indiscriminant interest in art as a window into humanity nicely explains the wide net cast by the first *New Images*. In his 1959 catalogue essay, Selz explained that the art in his show expressed “wounds of existence,” and revealed “sometimes a new dignity, sometimes despair, but always the uniqueness of man.” The work also asserted the “personal identity” of individual artists who were working in a time that, according to the Selz, was bogged down by “stereotypes and standardizations which have affected not only life in general but also many of our contemporary art exhibitions.”<sup>3</sup> This read as a not-too-subtle jab at the dominance of Abstract Expressionism, and its associated ideologies, in the post-war New York art world.

1. “New Images of Man,” Blum & Poe, 2020, [https://www.blumandpoe.com/exhibitions/new\\_images\\_of\\_man](https://www.blumandpoe.com/exhibitions/new_images_of_man).





*New Images of Man* (installation view).  
September 30, 1959–November 29, 1959. The  
Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, U.S.A. Image  
© The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA /  
Art Resource, NY. Photo: Soichi Sunami.

However, given how much of the work in the original *New Images* belonged to or was inspired by Abstract Expressionism and Art Informel, it is difficult to understand just how effectively Selz sidestepped “stereotypes and standardizations.” Certainly, the exhibition rebuffed any false sense that abstraction was still the newest, most dominant or progressive development in art of the time. The language of anguish and intense emotion that Selz attached to the work in his show also may have defied stereotypes and standards, but many of the same artists had been described in more subdued terms elsewhere. For instance, Jean Dubuffet, who contributed to *New Images* violent and rough, textured portraits that were childishly rudimentary in their approach to anatomy, was described by critic Clement Greenberg as having “intensity” and “concentration”<sup>4</sup>—whereas Selz said his work questioned existence itself. Rico LeBrun, then one of the main internationally-known painters based in Los Angeles, contributed loose charcoal and oil figures with heads vaguely resembling skeletons, and the then-young New Yorker Leon Golub showed a painting of a sometimes-limbless and out-of-proportion figure—Selz described both artists’ works as “frightening in their anguish.” He also found these artists “courageous” in their depiction of human hardship, hyperbole that now, looking back at the economic and social disparities of the 20th century, feels embarrassing.<sup>5</sup> Critics at the time thought so too; Manny Farber wrote in *Artnews* that “the Museum’s monster show is confusion with wishful thinking buried under its sentimental hide.”<sup>6</sup>

Despite its curator’s aforementioned attempt to defy standardization, the original show’s homogeneity remains its most frustrating element. There were no artists of color (though some, like Selz himself, were Jewish), and while Germaine Richier, the one woman included, worked in many veins throughout her life (she died the summer before *New Images* opened), Selz chose to include works of hers that closely resembled those of her contemporary, Giacometti. This indirectly supported

the inaccurate assumption that the latter influenced her (the type of sad, faceless figures depicted by Giacometti, whose work was featured on the exhibition catalogue’s cover, were clearly Selz’s preference). Selz did try to improve his gender parity record when he resurrected the show at Alphonse Berber gallery in 2009, including a few more women and revising the title to *New Images of Man and Woman*.

While (new) *New Images of Man* at Blum & Poe featured art by the original show’s old guard in multiple galleries, it was at its best when demonstrating how different the original could have been, by including works like *Marilyn* (1964) by Niki de Saint Phalle, an artist whom Selz made a habit of excluding from exhibitions (while championing her husband and collaborator, Jean Tinguely). Perched sphinxlike on a plinth, the almost-life-size figurative assemblage has burlap skin, lush raffia hair, large blue eyes, and smeared lipstick. Plastic baby dolls, toothy skulls, animal figurines, and fake flowers emerge from her body. The “wounds of existence” this sculpture speaks to—gender stereotypes, consumerism’s abuses—are far more local than existential. Beyond Saint Phalle, Gingeras included a number of female artists who were living and working back in 1959, and could have easily been included in the original MoMA exhibition: Yuki Katsura, Alina Szapocznikow, Lee Lozano, Carol Rama. They would have brought the levity and razor sharp wit that Selz’s self-serious dive into messy, painterly post-war figuration lacked. (The woman, used to being excluded, didn’t really give a damn about conveying epic emotion. Being artists who expressed any emotion at all was rebellious enough.)

In some ways, however, despite its inspired revisionism, the Blum & Poe show remained bogged down by its predecessor. For instance, Dave Muller, an artist on Blum & Poe’s roster who often reproduces vintage record and book covers in his work, made two massive paintings based on photographs of the original *New Images of Man* catalogue. In one, the larger-than-life image of the cover sports a

2. Gingeras also quotes this telling morsel in her *New Images* catalogue essay. Richard Sandimir, “Peter Selz, an Art Museum Force on Two Coasts, Dies at 100,” *The New York Times*, June 28, 2019.

3. Peter Selz, “Introduction,” *New Images of Man* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1959), 11.

4. Clement Greenberg, “Review of Exhibitions of Jean Dubuffet and Jackson Pollock,” *The Nation*, February 1, 1947.



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Top: Niki de Saint Phalle, *Marilyn* (1964). Mixed media (objects, paint, wool, fabric, mesh), 32.5 × 50.5 × 19.25 inches. © 2020 Niki Charitable Art Foundation. All rights reserved / ARS, NY / ADAGP, Paris. Image courtesy of the Foundation, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo and Galerie GP & N Vallois. Photo: Marten Elder.

Bottom: *New Images of Man* (installation view) (2020). Image courtesy of the artists and Blum & Poe, Los Angeles. Photo: Makenzie Goodman.



1949. His first exhibition, held immediately after the Liberation in October 1944, antagonized the public to such an extent that some of his paintings were destroyed despite the presence of armed guards. In the most shocking terms he had expressed the flammability of our existence, had even annihilated the existence itself.

Making masks, collecting the Port of the insane and red, studying cult images, Dubuffet had been searching not only for sources of creative inspiration, but for visible signs to express the very sources of life. Childbirth of 1944 (page 61), dates back to his first exhibition. The bright flat colors, the very child-like execution with its naive frontal vision, the simplified drawing, come much closer to children's art than does the work of more sophisticated painters like Klee and Miró who have also been inspired by the same source. Childbirth captures the naïveté of votive pictures; it is like those thank offerings found in pilgrimage churches and presents a comparable aspect of ritual, of "emotion recollected in tranquillity," which is as applicable to a religious celebration as to a work of art. In the statement Dubuffet wrote for this book, he speaks of ceremony and celebration and indeed these are key concepts for the comprehension of his work. Dubuffet celebrates the human comedy in all its tragic aspects.

Dubuffet has always been fascinated by the graffiti—rude scratchings found on walls all the way from prehistoric caves to those of the modern metropolis. The Archetype (opposite page 62) is the first of a series of graffiti made by the artist in 1945. The bold outlines of the coarse figures are incised into a dark and heavy ground. They remind us of the ancient convention of Egyptian painting with the frontal torso and the head, but they reject all the refinements of Egyptian painting in favor of a more primitive treatment. The material, a paste resembling an alchemist's concoction, is made out of innumerable ingredients besides sand, earth and water to which the pigment is added. Dubuffet's color and light are really functions of the pigment, which is of extreme importance to him as it is to many artists of his generation. Yet he controls his material in order to produce a ordant image to emerge. He may throw on his paint like an angry child, but his drawing is precise. The grotesque man with y... and grasshopper limbs (page 64) differs from the child's drawing in the intensity of the confrontation. Notwithstanding its cruel savagery this is a sympathetic, almost humorous Portrait. This fellow is more basic than Organization Man. Presented front-on and directly, violent and violated, distorted and agonized, the wild clown is still gesturing aggressively, urging not pity but compassion.

different than masks

Arendt quote  
REPEL APATHY

insane urgency to show with war still raging

why scare quotes? isn't quite



lost in European art

ARCHETYPAL DRIVE

TO EMERGE  
"emergence" is a repetitive trope in NEW IMAGES — as if the figures "develop" in the photo lab organically or subconsciously  
some force greater than artist's intent

antagonized  
shocking  
flimsiness  
insane  
untutored  
naive  
frontal  
votive  
tragic  
rude  
coarse  
DARK  
heavy  
primitive  
extreme  
ANGRY  
grotesque  
INTENSITY  
cruel  
savagery  
violent  
distorted  
aggravated



KILROY  
WAS  
HERE



Dubuffet: *Antegone* (1945). Mixed media on  
canvas, 39 1/2 x 31 1/2". Collection Leo Castelli,  
New York.

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venues of  
Willendorf's  
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collective ("MAN'S")  
unconscious.



Between April 1950 and February 1951 Dubuffet, whose output is phenomenal, painted about fifty pictures of the female nude. These *Corps de Dames* (page 65) are coarsely textured maps of the female body. The Western tradition of beauty and grace, indeed all of man's illusion about woman are destroyed by a savage evocation of a never-eradicated archetype going back to paleolithic stone effigies of fertility.

Dubuffet is related to surrealism, not in style but in basic attitude. He feels very strongly "that the key to things must not be as we imagine it, but that the world must be ruled by strange systems of which we have not the slightest





*New Images of Man* (installation view) (2020).  
Image courtesy of the artists and Blum & Poe,  
Los Angeles. Photo: Makenzie Goodman.

yellow \$5.00 Strand Books price sticker next to the mummy-like Giacometti, and in the other, Gingeras and Muller together annotated the blown-up rendering of the catalogue's pages about Dubuffet. They circled scare quotes and questioned verbs ("‘emergence’ is a repetitive trope...as if figures ‘develop’ ...organically or subconsciously"). They also installed small works by three artists—one female, and all self-taught—on top of this annotated spread. The intimately-scaled untitled 1944 watercolor by Italian artist Carol Rama, which features the same nude, ethereal and impudent woman Rama painted many times (this time with a floral crown and tongue hanging long over her chin), floated above Dubuffet's bio. A mystical 1960 painting by mid-century American outsider artist Eugene Von Bruenchenhein and small, threadbare figurines that French artist Michel Nedjar made in the 1980s and '90s interrupted a page about Dubuffet's interest in masks and graffiti. Rama, Von Bruenchenhein, and Nedjar certainly complicated the narrative, but it was still Selz's words that loomed largest.

Most galleries included at least one reference to a prominent old guard artist—in fact, in the catalogue, the show's different galleries are labeled "after Giacometti," "after Dubuffet," "after de Kooning," "after Bacon," and "after Westermann," though this organization isn't specified in the press release. A floor piece in one gallery, described on the image list as an "interpretation of Willem de Kooning," was a pastel drawing mimicking one of the same woman paintings that de Kooning contributed to the 1959 exhibition. The vital difference was that the Blum & Poe version was made by un-credited contractors hired by the gallery and laid underneath plexiglass for gallery-goers to walk on top of. While the difficulty of obtaining a de Kooning woman painting perhaps led to this improvisation, a greater significance was hard to pin down. Was the point just that we, in the 21st century, have become less reverent, better at

appropriation and manipulation? And what does it mean that the maker went uncredited in a show about the human condition, staged at a time when thousands of art world laborers have been unionizing in an effort to make their voices heard (and now, in the wake of the pandemic, many of these same workers have been let go)?

In another gallery, work by Francis Bacon—also an old guard *New Images* artist—hung on a wall, except not in the way you'd expect. Again, sidestepping inclusion of an actual Bacon work, the gallery sourced an army of maroon Centre Pompidou tote bags with Bacon's *Seated Figure* (1974) printed alongside the museum's logo. The bags were repeated again and again across the wall, forming a type of wallpaper. Hovering over these totes was a painting by Henry Taylor, *Untitled (ethiopian pharmacist)* (2016), much larger than the miniature Bacon images, but ultimately quieter. While Bacon's commercially reproduced figure writhes, Taylor's sits calmly, working with a mortar and pestle, a cross on the wall beside him. Taylor, who depicts people he knows in addition to anonymous or historical figures, portrays a more class conscious world than Bacon ever did, one in which there is at least as much, if not more, cause for anguish and despair but less palpable interest in it. Though the use of the totes sits a bit uneasily—many artists in the show, including younger ones, have become ubiquitous in art world marketing, and it wasn't clear if the totes were there to acknowledge or poke at this—the contrasting energy of these two artists was compelling. Such juxtapositions were a strength of Gingeras' curation.

Elsewhere in the show, Sarah Lucas' loopy, bodily, flesh-colored bronze (*Elf Warrior*, 2018) aped a 1965 bronze by Alina Szapocznikow, both of them weirder and more anatomically defiant than a nearby towering bronze female figure by César (another old guard male artist). César cut off his figure at the chest (she has no shoulders, arms, or head), and while Szapocznikow's and Lucas' figures have

5. For instance, in 2000, historian David Hopkins griped that Selz "made figuration look complicit with America's neutralized political status quo." Hopkins, *After Modern Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

6. Manny Farber, "New Images of (ugh) Man," *Artnews*, October 1959.





Top: Deana Lawson, *The Reception* (2006).  
Pigment print, 27 x 33.25 x 1.75 inches framed.  
Edition 2 of 6. © Deana Lawson. Image courtesy of  
the artist, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo,  
Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York, and Rhona  
Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.

Bottom: Zofia Rydet, *The Sociological Record,  
Podhale Region* (1979). Inkjet print, 23 x 34 inches.  
© Zofia Rydet. Image courtesy of the Foundation  
and Blum & Poe, Los Angeles/New York/Tokyo.

unnatural numbers of twisting limbs, they still seem more alive. The sheer number of artists in (new) *New Images* made room for many charming pairings, the best of which was the pairing of photographers Deana Lawson, active since the mid-2000s, and Zofia Rydet, who died in 1997 after spending the last 20 years of her life trying to document the interior of every home in her native Poland for a project she called *Sociological Record*. The two were paired in an installation in Blum & Poe's lobby that was essentially a show inside a show—an homage to another influential “human condition” MoMA show often discussed alongside *New Images*: 1955's *The Family of Man*. This felt less confusing in person than in writing, as the two photographers' images were the first and last works viewers saw when walking through the exhibition—Rydet's a compelling attempt to convey people's economic realities alongside the care they put into their personal environments, and Lawson's opulently staged in collaboration with her subjects, who pose in their own cared-for but imperfect homes.

While this pairing beautifully traversed class and opportunity divides, the majority of the artists represented in (new) *New Images* now have art world and art market credentials. Granted, there are a few exceptions: Luis Flores' career is still young, and others, like the late Yuki Katsura, still don't have the museum presence they deserve. But even once obscure outsider artists like Von Bruenchenhein have become market darlings; others, both late and living, have had their share of major museum shows and are represented by established galleries. Whatever progress it has made since 1959, the art world is still not known for its democracy and inclusivity. Being a gallery-represented artist is not accessible to all humans who make art, and situations like the one we are in now—where young artists lose the part-time museum jobs keeping them afloat and others realize that art school is not something they can afford—further reduce that access. For all (new) *New*

*Images* did to upend a problematic, yet iconic, moment in art history, its lingering complicity with art world hierarchies ultimately lessened its resonance.

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# Catastrophe

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April 5, 1815: On the lush Indonesian island of Sumbawa, poisonous plumes of ash and molten lava began spewing from the cone of a once-dormant Mount Tambora. Five days later, the tip of Tambora exploded and collapsed; its peak folded into a concave crater, reducing its height by nearly a mile.<sup>1</sup> This staggering detonation is regarded as the largest volcanic eruption in recorded human history—its violence even surpasses that of fellow Indonesian volcano, Krakatoa, the 1883 explosion that emitted the loudest bellow ever measured by humans.<sup>2</sup>

While the immediate death toll from the Tambora eruption was grievous (an estimated 10,000 people perished), the chain reaction of environmental devastation that it unleashed proved even more ferocious, claiming the lives of some 100,000 people. Miniscule particles of volcanic ash infiltrated the stratosphere, blanketing the Earth's atmosphere with sulphurous matter that obstructed sunlight in both hemispheres for years. The year following the eruption, 1816, is referred to as "the year without a summer," a time when snowfall and darkness oppressed the otherwise routinely balmy skies.<sup>3</sup> What began as a local calamity mushroomed into an encyclopedia of global catastrophe: temperatures plummeted, tempestuous storms raged, economies collapsed, crops floundered, famine ensued, and the world's first cholera pandemic took root.

Today, almost exactly 205 years after Tambora, I am confined to my home in balmy Los Angeles under a statewide shelter-in-place order—a desperate decree aimed at mitigating the local repercussions of our current global catastrophe (this one in the form of an insidious virus). As of this writing, similar lockdowns affect approximately 95% of Americans;<sup>4</sup> tomorrow, these

measures will surely swell. From here, I see the Tambora eruption and its aftermath as an ominous, unnerving, and fascinating parable—one that presages how our own surreal narrative might soon unfurl. The Tambora incident reveals that a catastrophe can stir up profound cultural effects that stretch far beyond the initial point of crisis. As the coronavirus pandemic continues to accelerate with unimaginable velocity, the social and cultural ramifications, which may presently elude us, are certain to be vast. In the meantime, we remain fearful and disoriented, terrified of others and of contagion, and unaware of what shape reality will take when we finally emerge from this nightmare. This pathos finds echoes in pandemics of the past, from the plague to the Spanish Flu and the HIV/AIDS crisis—all of which similarly fractured and reoriented artistic thought.

The Tambora eruption elicits breathless awe in part because of the ways in which it can be viewed as an origin point for what, on the surface, would appear to be completely unrelated cultural phenomena. In July of 1816, Mary Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, and several others were confined together in a villa near Lake Geneva, their leisure time stifled by the ceaseless, malevolent storms that characterized "the year without a summer."<sup>5</sup> As the group reveled in the exchange of sanguine ghost stories, two canonical narratives emerged: Mary Shelley penned *Frankenstein* and John Polidori (who was also present) wrote *The Vampyre*,<sup>6</sup> a gothic thriller credited with anointing the modern vampire tale. In London, meanwhile, artist J.M.W. Turner's wispy sunset paintings<sup>7</sup> immortalized the extraordinary colors caused by the infinitesimal veil of volcanic dust that filtered the sun, creating a luminescent halo that lingered for years.<sup>8</sup>

With contagion, the instant of catastrophe occurs in multiplicity, fissuring our relationship to intimacy and rechoreographing our bodies' relationship to communal space (here, the communal, creative intimacy shared

1. Erik Klemetti, "Tambora 1815: Just How Big Was the Eruption?," *Wired Magazine*, April 10, 2015, <https://www.wired.com/2015/04/tambora-1815-just-big-eruption/>.





Edvard Munch, *Self-Portrait with the Spanish Flu* (1919). Oil on canvas, 59 × 51.5 inches.  
Photo: Nasjonalmuseet/Høstland, Børre.



by Shelley and Byron becomes an utterly impossible romance). Disease differs from other natural disasters in that it invasively assaults the body, making physical proximity to other humans the locus of crisis. Today, this manifests as social distancing, a form of which can be traced back to the plague epidemics that blighted Medieval Europe.

The contemporary notion of social separation as a tactic to deter disease transmission originated in 14th century Venice, where ships were forced to isolate in port for 40 days as a means to temper the bubonic plague, which spread through populations like wildfire. (As such, the etymology of quarantine stems from the Italian word *quaranta*, meaning forty).<sup>9</sup> The disease decimated somewhere between 30 and 60% of Europe's population, with additional outbreaks occurring over several centuries (infections still persist to this day).<sup>10</sup> Solidified as an abject horror, the plague's ghastly, seemingly biblical pestilence made close physical contact perilously radioactive.

Still, amidst these histories of forced seclusion, creativity found peculiar ways of manifesting. The phenomenological history of the plague's isolating reality can be traced to the existence of plague stones, sculptural oddities that, despite appearing modernist in form, reflect Restoration-era attempts to mitigate physical commingling as a vehicle for contagion. Erected by several English municipalities in the 17th century, these idiosyncratic, humble stone monuments were intended to function as sanitized sites of commercial exchange during periods of rampant infection.<sup>11</sup> Often called vinegar stones, they were topped with small hollows that cradled pools of vinegar or citrus juice, thought at the time to be potent disinfectants. Hoping to purge their exchangeable goods of festering bacteria, townspeople would place coins and other objects directly into the bath, thereby outsourcing direct human touch to these strange surrogate totems.

In 2013, Belgian artist Sophie Nys began photographing England's remaining plague stones. Her images, compiled

in an artist's book titled *Vinegar Stones* (2015),<sup>12</sup> casually document these uncanny relics in their contemporary surroundings: some stand proudly erect in provincial town squares with commemorative plaques, while others have been exiled to mossy, overgrown corners of idyllic countryside. While initially functioning as sculptural buttresses against the perils of bodily contact, these stones now function as haptic indices of these very perils—lone bodies memorializing both the infected and the recovered. Their physical remnants solemnize the invisible virality of disease. As crumbling cenotaphs to a long-passed public health terror, these plague stones also offer a macabre reminder that the coronavirus pandemic will too become a calamity of the past, leaving a litany of material (and digital) ruin in its wake.

Like Tambora, the plague reshaped artistic output in Western Europe—the pervasive threat of death bled into the continent's cultural psychology. The fact that the disease so viciously and viscerally threatened all social strata regardless of wealth, morality, and piety fed a burgeoning predilection with death as a persistent artistic and literary trope—and not necessarily in terms of religious salvation. The *danse macabre* (dance of death), for example, a dual visual and linguistic allegory that ruminates on the wretched terror of humanity's shared mortality, traces its roots to the plague pandemics of the 14th century (with additional credit given to the myriad traumas of the Hundred Years War).<sup>13</sup> Materializing as painting, poetry, or didactic morality play, *danse macabre* consists of an inauspicious yet gleeful skeleton marching or dancing its mortal victims (whether papal or plebeian) from their quotidian toils to their earthen graves. The horror of the dance ultimately resides in the imminent anxiety of waiting, consummated by the act of being summoned to meet your fate by a loathsome figure whose form you will soon take. Hans Holbein the Younger's *Danse Macabre*, a series of 41 woodcuts created between 1524 and 1525, is

2. "On This Day: Historic Krakatau Eruption of 1883," National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, August 26, 2017, <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/day-historic-krakatau-eruption-1883>.

3. Chris Townsend, "Year Without a Summer," *The Paris Review*, October 25, 2016, <https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2016/10/25/year-without-summer/>.



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Hans Holbein, *Dance of Death: The Old Man* (c. 1526).  
Woodcut. Gift of The Print Club of Cleveland, 1929.  
Image courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art.





Sophie Nys, *Altofts* (2014).  
Photogram. Image courtesy of the artist  
and Galerie Greta Meert.



Sophie Nys, *Plague Stones* (2013).  
Images courtesy of the artist and Cabinet.



regarded as one of the most renowned works in the genre, which remained popular through the 19th century.<sup>14</sup>

The plague proved culturally generative in other ways as well. For example, it catalyzed some of Shakespeare's greatest works (he drafted *King Lear* while in quarantine,<sup>15</sup> a fact that has circulated widely on social media in recent weeks, much to the dismay of artists struggling to be productive). It also facilitated in the development of Isaac Newton's laws of motion and gravity (he conceptualized both theories while isolating himself from the Great Plague of London in 1665).<sup>16</sup> Historical anecdotes aside, there is danger in romanticizing the creative benefits of quarantine during a fatal pandemic (from inane Instagram memes to anemic articles dispensing productivity tips, this sentiment has circulated widely in recent weeks as well). While the cultural canon has certainly been enlivened by the inadvertent consequences of disaster, these catastrophes warrant, first and foremost, profound collective mourning.

Pandemics account for an utterly staggering loss of life, and such casualties also exert cultural tolls. The swift acceleration of the novel coronavirus has elicited comparisons to the influenza pandemic of 1918, also referred to as the Spanish flu, which eventually infected a third of the world's population.<sup>17</sup> A more invisible threat than the bubonic plague, the flu primarily suppresses breath and overwhelms the body with rushes of feverish delirium. These hallucinatory qualities infiltrated the works of the artists who suffered it. Edvard Munch's 1919 painting, *Self-Portrait with the Spanish Flu*, depicts the artist, who long nursed a fascination with death and despair, in the midst of sickness: he stares laconically towards the viewer while sitting upright in a chair, swaddled with blankets that were perhaps dragged from the crumpled bed in the background. His mouth rests agape and his eyes appear hollow in his skeletal face. While the painting is surprisingly vivid and chromatic, the colors betray a palette of malaise—deep jaundiced

yellows, bile-like greens, and febrile reds gesturally collide to impart the tone of a fever dream. Munch survived, emerging from convalescence to paint *Self-Portrait after the Spanish Flu* (1919), a looser and ironically less vibrant composition—a testament to the traumatic cellular assault that, even after the fact, the artist was likely still recovering from.

Viennese painter Egon Schiele, on the other hand, perished in the 1918 pandemic, as did his mentor, Gustav Klimt. Several months before his own death, Schiele—who already interpreted the human body as a twisted, agitated, sickly mass—sketched an image of Klimt on his deathbed, rendering only his disembodied head.<sup>18</sup> In *Gustav Klimt on his Death Bed* (1918), Klimt's recessed facial contours, stricken countenance, and bulging yet sunken eyes emblemize the brutal machinations of illness, as if Schiele had captured him postmortem. Both artists' untimely demises (Klimt was 55, Schiele only 28) carved a wound in the trajectory of Viennese modernism, as they each left extensive inventories of unfinished and unrealized works behind. These were just two of 50 million deaths, each one an acute and bitter loss.

During the height of the more recent HIV/AIDS crisis (a pandemic ongoing since 1981), mass loss ravaged entire communities, with particular devastation befalling the art world. These communal losses were so great that psychologists began noting the prevalence of a condition referred to as “multiple loss syndrome,” a merciless combination of bereavement, anxiety, PTSD, and exhaustion triggered by the death of multiple loved ones.<sup>19</sup> Felix Gonzalez-Torres' “*Untitled*” (1991) is one of the more poignant memorials to the stinging intimacy of this crisis. Originally installed as a billboard in various locations throughout Hamburg, Germany, and shortly thereafter in New York City, the work is a photograph of an unmade bed, with the tousled imprints of two bodies clearly visible on the empty, rumpled sheets. An oblique

4. Sarah Mervosh, Denise Lu, Vanessa Swales, “See Which States and Cities Have Told Residents to Stay at Home,” *The New York Times*, April 7, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-stay-at-home-order.html>.

5. William J. Broad, “A Volcanic Eruption that Reverberates 200 Years Later,” *The New York Times*, August 25, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/science/mount-tambora-volcano-eruption-1815.html?searchResultPosition=7>.

reference to his partner Ross, who died of AIDS that same year, the image eulogizes both the pleasure of love and the brutality of grief, an emotion that also infects the body. As a rite of private mourning made public, the work's vulnerability was exacerbated by the fact that much of the American public exhibited cruel and inhuman disdain for both gay people and AIDS victims, from Reagan's refusal to publicly acknowledge the disease to the Supreme Court's abominable 1986 ruling that declared (as activist/historian Simon Watney bluntly summarized) that "American gay men have no constitutional right to privacy from direct police interference in their own homes."<sup>20</sup> Here, bodies bore a twofold assault—they were pillaged internally by disease and otherized externally by conservative bigotry and governmental malfeasance. In this sense, the photograph of the bed functions as a communal memorial for the multi-layered traumas of the crisis: it becomes a surrogate for both individual and collective loss, as well as a political monument to the war on intimate touch.

As such, the AIDS crisis serves as a blunt reminder that a pandemic has the ability to locate and agitate our pre-existing societal wounds, causing them to fissure and break further. The deepening coronavirus disaster has roused many of the same grim ailments that the AIDS crisis did: it has revealed our unjust dearth of accessible healthcare, the fatal incompetence of our government's bureaucracy, the debased tone of our political rhetoric, and our blatant devaluing of life in favor of capital gains. Like pandemics of the past, the threat of an invisible disease has also paralyzed our most human gestures, confining us to our homes (for those privileged enough to have them), and seeding suspicion of our neighbors as potential sites of sickness. Now, as public space and private space fold into one another, Gonzalez-Torres' publicly displayed bed functions as another metaphor for the ways in which this catastrophe has seeped into the crevices of our intimate lives, suddenly vulnerable to loss.

In this moment, Gonzalez-Torres' billboard also functions as a different kind of political signifier: it becomes an icon of intimacy, privacy, and security, its public display suggestive of the ways in which ownership of or access to a bed—a symbol but also a commodity—has become a wildly misplaced indicator of social value, an almost farcical metric of humanity. Recently, I thought of this billboard after seeing an image circulating that depicted authorities in Las Vegas corralling people to sleep in six-by-six foot "social distance" grids demarcated on the street, while the city's sprawling matrix of empty hotels, home to 150,000 empty beds, loomed in the background.<sup>21</sup> Here, the billboard can be reinterpreted as an ode to, or a gesture of outrage for, our marginalized and un-homed neighbors, whose bodies will bear the brunt of this crisis. Like Sophie Nys' images of plague stones, Gonzalez-Torres' bed memorializes past tragedy while also viscerally reminding us of what trauma may come.

While, as in the past, artists and writers will surely mold our cultural responses to this blossoming catastrophe, many were already astutely and poetically navigating the waters of societal crisis long before the coronavirus became a black swan calamity. Now, as the formal institutions around us buckle and shutter, their once imposing facades betray fallibility. These fractures were already present. To be clear, catastrophe was too: we have been enduring (and willfully ignoring) a seemingly endless procession of environmental, epidemiological, and sociopolitical crises for decades, even generations. (The word crisis itself is a regular guest in discussions theorizing postmodernity). Here, however, as the pandemic's brute force of disruption implicates our lives, bodies, and quotidian habits, this new, heightened meter of urgency demands a more cogent collective response (such as pushing to dismantle the faulty social structures amplifying the virus' reach). For creatives, perhaps this means a more emphatic embrace of the

6. John William Polidori, *The Vampyre; A Tale*, (London: Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, 1819),

7. Broad, "A Volcanic Eruption."

8. Stephen F. Corfidi, "The Colors of Sunset and Twilight," National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration / National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center, September 2014, <https://www.spc.noaa.gov/publications/corfidi/sunset/>.

community we've now been forcefully sequestered from. In the meantime, while disease, like volcanic ash, blankets and infests our structural supports, artists and writers remain present and the work continues. Catastrophe is crushing, yet it can often feed future regenerative acts: Tambora's pyroclastic flows were fatally toxic, but the soil it seeded was wildly fertile.

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9. Eugenia Tognotti, "Lessons from the history of quarantine, from plague to influenza A," *Emerging Infectious Diseases* vol.19, no 2 (2013): 254–259, doi:10.3201/eid1902.120312.
10. James T. Eastman, "The Making of a Pandemic: Bubonic Plague in the 14th Century," *The Journal of Lancaster General Hospital*, vol. 4, no 1 (2009): 10–17, [http://www.jlgh.org/JLGH/media/Journal-LGH-Media-Library/Past%20Issues/Volume%204%20-%20Issue%201/v4\\_i1\\_Eastman.pdf](http://www.jlgh.org/JLGH/media/Journal-LGH-Media-Library/Past%20Issues/Volume%204%20-%20Issue%201/v4_i1_Eastman.pdf).
11. Sophie Nys, "Artist Project: Plague Stones," *Cabinet Magazine*, issue 53 (2014): 58–61, <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/53/nys.php>.
12. Sophie Nys, "Vinegar Stones," *Printed Matter*, accessed March 13, 2020, <https://www.printedmatter.org/catalog/41199/>.
13. Megan L. Cook and Elizaveta Strakhov, "Introduction," *John Lydgate's Dance of Death and Related Works* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2019), <https://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/cook-and-strakhov-dance-of-death-introduction>.
14. "Dancing with Death: the origins and development of the motif and its representation in graphic art: the Gemmell Collection at the University of Glasgow Library," University of Glasgow Library, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/library/files/special/exhibns/death/holbein.html>.
15. Daniel Pollack-Pelzner, "Shakespeare Wrote His Best Works During a Plague," *The Atlantic*, Published March 14, 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2020/03/broadway-shutdown-could-be-good-theater-coronavirus/607993/>.
16. "Year of Wonders: 1665–1667," Woolsthorpe Manor, National Trust, accessed March 16, 2020, <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/woolsthorpe-manor/features/year-of-wonders>.
17. "History of 1918 Flu Pandemic," Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), updated March 21, 2018, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-commemoration/1918-pandemic-history.htm>.
18. Allison C. Meier, "Spanish Flu and the depiction of disease," Wellcome Collection, October 16, 2019, <https://wellcomecollection.org/articles/XabLWhAAACEAnUH2>.
19. Simon Watney, "These waves of dying friends: gay men, AIDS, and multiple loss," *Imagine Hope: AIDS and Gay Identity* (London: Routledge, 2000).
20. Simon Watney, "In Purgatory: the work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres," *Imagine Hope: AIDS and Gay Identity* (London: Routledge, 2000).
21. Briana Erickson, "Officials: Parking Lot Homeless Shelter in Las Vegas Was Last Resort," *Las Vegas Review Journal*, March 31, 2020, <https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/politics-and-government/clark-county/officials-parking-lot-homeless-shelter-in-las-vegas-was-last-resort-1996083/>.





Felix Gonzalez-Torres, "Untitled" (1991). Billboard, dimensions vary with installation. © Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Courtesy of the Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation. From the exhibition: *Print/Out* at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY. 19 Feb. – 14 May 2012. Cur. Christopher Cherix. [With outdoor billboards on display 20 Feb. – 18 Mar. 2012.] Installation location: 11th Avenue and 38th Street, Manhattan. Photo: David Allison.



# Walking in L.A.

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There is something perverse about walking in Los Angeles. Action and context never quite match. The city, despite my love for it, feels designed so that walking must happen in spite of its qualities: vague, decentralized planning, narrow or non-existent sidewalks, whole neighborhoods aggressively fenced off, streets that unexpectedly fail to connect, and above all great swaths of distance between things. Resisting and pushing through these obstacles can be thrilling in its wrongness, or it can just feel wrong—Los Angeles is just as fascinating, messy, and sporadically ordinary in slow motion as it is by car. The act of unhurriedly absorbing and taking in Los Angeles can be disturbing. It makes the city a real place rather than an idea or a myth, just as art devises material objects from immaterial concepts.

Sometime in the 1960s, the Santa Monica Freeway sliced right through the middle of West Adams, where I currently live, demolishing entire blocks of homes. Former neighbors, once able to stroll easily to one another's houses, were left with sporadic connections across the freeway gulf in the form of occasional overpasses every four to six blocks, many of which now also act as on- and off-ramps for traffic. Reyner Banham defined the freeway system as "a single comprehensible place, a coherent state of mind, a complete way of life" for the Angeleno.<sup>1</sup> In Banham's 1971 depiction, the world along the freeway—consisting of plants, architecture, and the people living there—is a kind flashing image, with all the depth that implies. In his schema, we only drive or arrive—the animating life behind the flickering architecture along our route remain opaque, and our own lives remain dangerously singular.

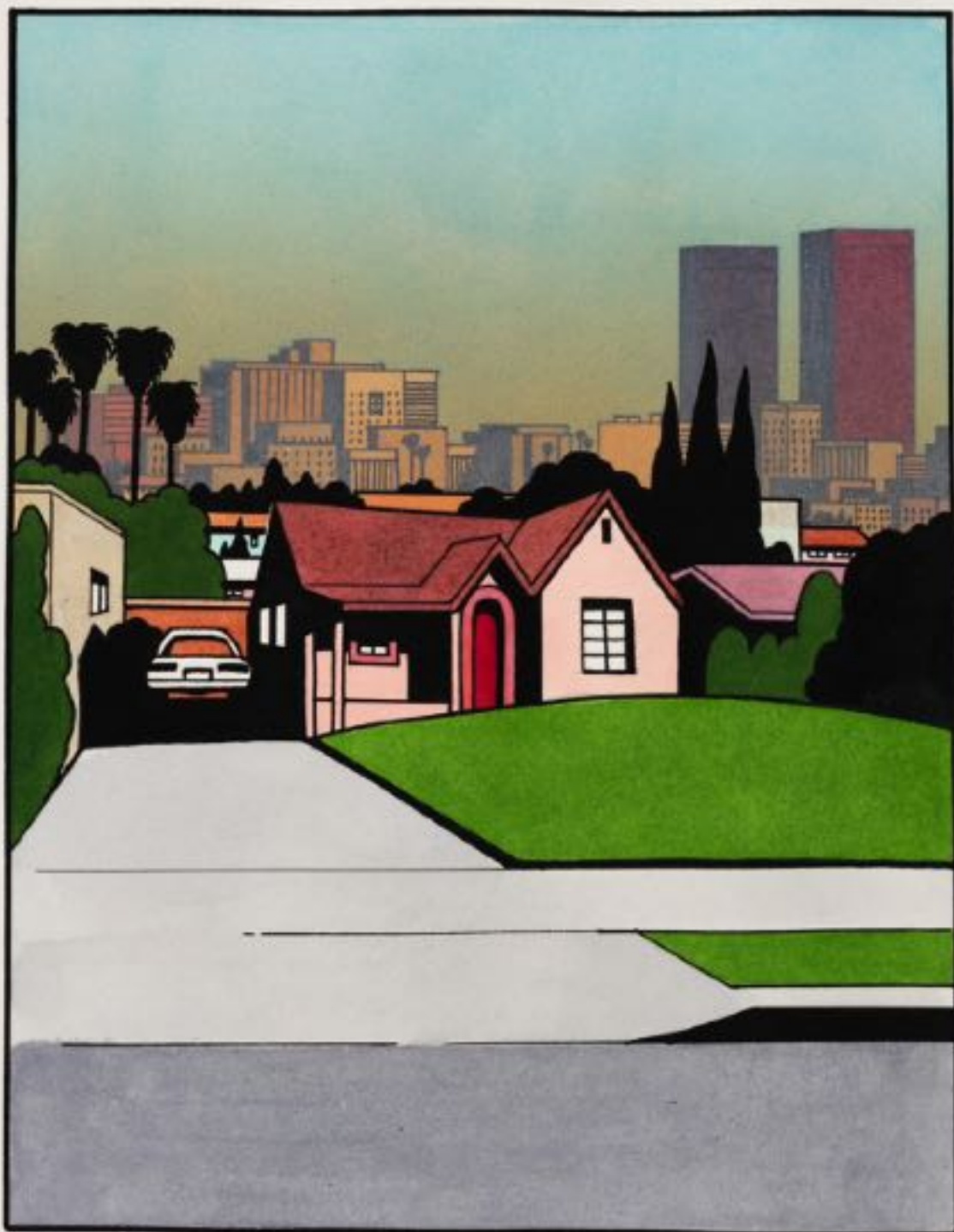
I have been walking multiple times a day, every day, since California began sheltering in place. I walk all the time anyway—sometimes to work; sometimes halfway to work; sometimes getting off the bus early to walk a few blocks; sometimes just around and around in circles, departure and destination neatly overlapping. Walking for me serves two purposes—a slow, sustained physical wearing-out, and the temporary ordering of a very chatty mind. Walking offers a slow, unrolling focus, somewhere between leisure and exercise—a counter-rhythm to my own cycling thoughts and an antidote to my own restlessness. I walk in Los Angeles excessively, as if it were something that I risk forgetting how to do, like writing in cursive. In some ways, this is one manifestation of a deep, reflexively contrary impulse: to never be anywhere too crowded, too popular, too obvious, or for too long.

There is something ordinary, even corny, about walking—hiking without the performative pressure, moving with no specific order nor even purpose. My mind ebbs from focus to distraction, stopping whenever, for whatever reason, then starting again. Walking and looking at my immediate surroundings have largely replaced biking, taking the bus, or driving to the manifold art galleries within Los Angeles to have a look at whatever is there. Art can appeal to a pondering mind or a sensual body; good art finds a way into both. Art is a rare kind of evaporative experience—resistant to strict standards of quality, slippery to define—and particularly so in a city as ambivalent towards history and memory as Los Angeles. Walking, when it's good, ekes out an undulating rhythm of thought and recall. Art, on the other hand, works on a rhythm of disclosure and opacity, and looking at artwork, for me at least, is equal parts work and pleasure. The work part of it can invoke a pesky cynicism that I have to continually swat away, which in turn keeps the pleasurable moments enlivening.

Soon after I moved to Los Angeles, I remember seeing Mernet Larsen's

1. Reyner Banham: *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (University of California Press: 1971), pg. 195.

2. Laurie Anderson, "New Jersey Turnpike," from *United States Live* (Rhino/Warner Brothers, 1984).



PRICE 94

Ken Price, *Security, Domesticity, Leisure* (1994).  
Ink and acrylic on paper, 20.5 × 16.5 × 1.25 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and  
Kayne Griffin Corcoran.

painting, *Chainsawer and Bicyclist* (2014): a woman in a blue dress, her hair in a bun, holds a chainsaw lightly beneath the crook of her elbow, as if cradling a purse. A bicyclist in the upper frame seems about to careen directly into the teeth of the saw; a single diagonal line links them both, suggesting their inevitable meeting. Larsen's figures are blocky and geometric, positioned at oblique angles to the viewer and to one another. Action is frozen, and a course of action implied, but the simplicity and domestic ordinariness of the scene discloses little. The figures' geometry suggests the monolithic, as if these beings, complete unto themselves, can only hover at the point of collision, never meeting. The longer the movement in *Chainsawer and Bicyclist* is arrested (and it is always arrested), the calmer the composition begins to seem. The thin diagonal linking each figure might instead be keeping them a safe, but curious distance apart. As walking has become routine, I've started to recognize the same people on their own series of loops. Sometimes, I'm joined by friends, marching nearby at oddly-spaced distances. Standing near the edge of a green rectangle, Larsen's chainsawer is perhaps seconds from stepping into the cyclist's path, suggesting that the world beyond her own lawn is so precarious that an implement is in order. We all currently have our own defensive systems of masks, hand sanitizer, and wet wipes for dealing with the threat of contagion from the world outside.

Slow, prolonged contact with my immediate surroundings has taken the place of sometimes equally slow (or sometimes very brief) encounters with artwork. But focus begets fascination if you are curious enough, and the observed object tends to grow in weight as you continue looking. Walking as its own end suggests that focusing plainly on the world around you is something to take seriously. It requires a certain amount of faith in the unremarkable to hold your attention. Howardena Pindell's *Video Drawings: Baseball* (1973–76) painstakingly maps,

delineates, or attempts to predict a compressed sequence of movements between baseball players, who stand blurry and frozen in a video still underneath her teeming notations. Pindell's marks suggests the real-time, predictive flurry of a sports announcer eager to wring greater detail from the freeze-frame. Walking slightly differing routes, at slightly differing times in the same neighborhood brings difference and texture to a repetitive experience, a reminder that there are many paths between points, as in Pindell's drawing, which looks to describe most of them.

I remember the peculiarity of watching my grandfather, in West Virginia, zoom out from my Google-mapped Los Angeles address on his iPad, pinching again and again with two fingers, the city demurely failing to reveal its edges. The smattering of nature throughout Los Angeles tends to obscure its overwhelming size, breaking the city down into a series of loose, colliding neighborhoods. Google Maps revealed the lie, or rather the limits of the truth, and it felt as if I were watching myself through my grandfather, trapped in a maze. In Mary Reid and Patrick Kelley's retelling of the myth of the Minotaur in the labyrinth (*Priapus Agonistes*, 2013), the Minotaur reinterprets the labyrinth from within, wandering its depths and coming across trinkets left by visitors past. The graffiti and objects left behind animate the labyrinth further, like a narrative that never discloses its overarching order but suggests its shape. If Los Angeles cannot be understood, it can at least be slowly digested. *A city that repeats itself, endlessly. Hoping that something will stick in its mind.*<sup>2</sup>

A sequence of objects along a walk, simply by way of being encountered, takes on the rhythm of narrative. In Los Angeles, garbage and litter interlace with wild and domesticated plant life, climbing and crawling alongside the walls, chain-link fences, cracked sidewalks, and parking meters that define the city's narrow bands of public space. Litter has as mysterious and impenetrable a story to tell as the most



Mernet Larsen, *Chainsaw and Bicyclist* (2014).  
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 49.5 × 49 inches.  
Image courtesy the artist and Various Small Fires,  
Los Angeles/Seoul.







Mary Reid Kelley & Patrick Kelley, *Priapus Agonistes* (video still) (2013). Single-channel HD video with sound, 15 minutes, 9 seconds. Edition 4 of 6 + 2AP. Image courtesy of the artists, Fredericks & Freiser Gallery, New York, Vielmetter Los Angeles, and Pilar Corrias, London.

esoteric and busy artwork. There is a section along Washington Boulevard filled with haphazard arrangements of garbage that tell so many partial stories that a cohesive narrative is hopeless: what looks like five pounds of (cooked) spaghetti next to three mismatched shoes and an overturned stroller; a refrigerator with the front door torn off, housing a single, unopened box of caster sugar. A series of small, identical, empty liquor bottles set at regular intervals along a nearby chain-link fence indicates both effort and specificity. And idleness.

Whether the product of idleness or an illustration of graceful tedium, Alejandro Almanza Pereda's photograph *Just five blocks away* (2015) pictures a precarious underwater still life. Pool noodles, fruits, and vases float and are weighted down in a tight arrangement of cinderblocks. The objects—glassy, synthetic, sometimes organic—are unrelated beyond the fact that they have been corralled into the same frame, and they teeter in gently refracting underwater light. Harmony is less the point than balance, brevity, or the coy impermanence of the photographed moment. Pereda's image, like a strange arrangement encountered on a walk, suggests boredom as an opportunity for pause; if instead of avoiding the mundane, we treat it as one of many states, a disarrayed moment might align into meaning.

The air in Los Angeles is strangely clean lately, free of traffic's drone and less frantic in its mix of smells. It is only since movement has slowed that I can take in a deep breath of a blooming flower without the immediate, accompanying riptide of urine, marijuana, or unidentifiable aerosol. In walking, my mind meanders now as often as my path: zeroing in on details of houses—particular shades of wood stain, or tiny, strangely-placed windows—as well as budding flowers, arrangements of graffiti and litter, and glum perspectives down alleyways. There is discord and near-harmony, in endless combinations. In at least this sense, Los Angeles is settling, like sediment in water.

Our pandemic underscores the intricate interconnection of the world,

and its precarity. Leo Marx, in *The Machine in the Garden* (1964), characterizes life in America in part by “a habit of defining reality as a contradiction between radically opposed forces.” Maybe what's most freeing in walking for its own sake is the lack of intention, especially in a time of such careful distancing and uncertain movement. Walking feels freeing, even as it slows the sense of control I have over my immediate surroundings as I venture further out, away from my apartment and neighborhood, uncertain of what I might find.

Aaron Horst is a writer based in Los Angeles. His writing has appeared in *Carla*, *Flash Art*, and *ArtReview*.



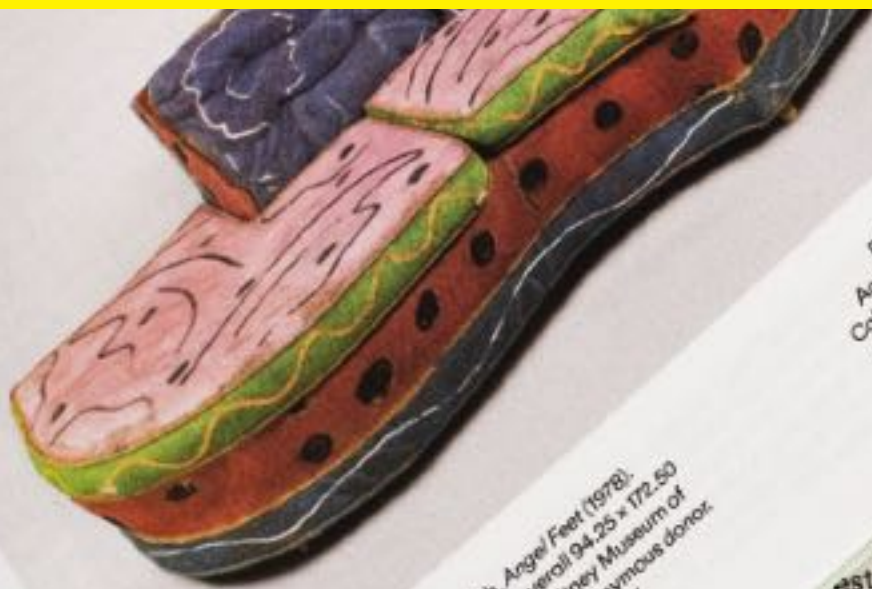


Alejandro Almanza Pereda, *Just five blocks away*  
 (2015). Archival pigment print, 26 × 26 inches.  
 Edition 1/5 + AP. Image courtesy of the artist  
 and Ibid Projects Archives, London/Los Angeles.  
 Photo: Jeff McLane.



Books about art and early...  
 spiritual art in particular, Susan...  
 at Klint in those inserting the...  
 worried that those inserting the...  
 the mainstream art historical...  
 might be misrepresenting the artist...  
 own interests. "[T]he claim for at Klint...  
 an inventor of abstract art runs into two...  
 serious problems," wrote Tallman. "The...  
 first is that it doesn't seem to match...  
 she thought the work should function...  
 The second is that abstraction was...  
 'invented' in the same sense that...  
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 Tallman noted that of Klint...  
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## Carla, a Timeline in 5 Years



Below: Kim MacConnel, *Untitled* (1982).  
 Acrylic on upholstered sofa, 31 x 96 x 46 inches.  
 Collection Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego.  
 Gift of The Prop Foundation. Photo: Pablo Moscon.

Above: Robert Zakanitch, *Angel Feet* (1978).  
 Acrylic on canvas, three parts, overall 94.25 x 172.50  
 inches. Image courtesy of the Whitney Museum of  
 American Art, New York, gift of an anonymous donor.  
 Image © Whitney Museum, NY.

...like many...  
 the grid liberally,  
 in repetition's role  
 as Minimalist exercises if  
 their arches, curves, and quilt-  
 (e palettes). Later, Jaudon and Kozloff  
 further unpacked prejudices against  
 pattern in their immensely  
 "Art

...discomfiting...  
 how to theorize it...  
 Kuspit did know h...  
 about Pictures Generat...  
 as Sherrie Levine, whos...  
 "more significant for wh...  
 than for what it is in its...  
 a kind of meta, cynica...  
 P&D artists almost un...  
 Recently, curator and...  
 Sorkin posited that p...  
 P&D receded from p...  
 Pictures Generation...  
 emerged in the 1970...  
 in appropriation, th...  
 cemented position...  
 that the latter gro...  
 critical a...





12. Donald Kuspit, "Robert Kushner's History of Consciousness," in Robert Kushner (Philadelphia: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1987), p. 21.
13. Donald Kuspit, "Sherry Levine," *Artforum*, December 1987.
14. Jenni Sorkin, "Patterns and Pictures: strategies of appropriation, 1975-85," *Burlington Contemporary*, May 2019.
15. Mallin Wilson Powell, "Worldly Art Critic's Work Resurfaces," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 19, 2023.
16. Susan Tallman, "Painting the Beyond," *The New York Review of Books*, April 4, 2019.

As we celebrate our five-year anniversary, we wanted to look back over each year of the magazine, tracing our growth along with the major exhibitions and events that have shaped our L.A. art community. Museums and galleries have opened and closed, unions have rallied, and beautiful exhibitions have come through our city. We asked five of our writers to look back with us, prompting them to remember a *Carla* article from each of our five years. Alongside this, each writer highlights major events and influences that have impacted both the art world in L.A. and their own personal engagement with the city.



Photo: Erin F. O'Leary.

Nancy Graves, *Acordia* (1975)  
Painting, 92.25 x 48 x 23.5 inches  
Collection of Art...



# 2015

## Aaron Horst

**Carla article**

### **“Layers of Leimert Park,” Catherine Wagley**

**(Carla, issue 2)**

Catherine Wagley captures a nuanced, complex, contextual, and above all local picture of a neighborhood in Los Angeles with both rich historical weight and an unclear future. Wagley deftly unspools the intertwining realities of power, history, real estate, and the public good that the contemporary art world has a hand in shaping, for better or for worse.



**L.A. exhibition**

### **John Bock, *Three Sisters* at Regen Projects**

**(November 6–  
December 19, 2015)**

Vengeance, film noir tics, Cronenberg-ian assemblages, and flashing lights comprised John Bock’s installation *Three Sisters*. Bock’s 40-minute film centerpiece both chews and is chewed by the film’s scenery, which filled up Regen Projects’ main room as if flung out by the film’s intensity. Drama of my favorite sort.

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Top: Public opening of *Charles Gaines: Librettos: Stokely Carmichael/ Manuel de Falla* at Art + Practice, Los Angeles. February 28, 2015. Photo: Andreas Branch.

Bottom: The Art + Practice campus from Leimert Boulevard in Leimert Park, Los Angeles. June 16, 2015. Photo: Natalie Hon.

John Bock, *Three Sisters* (installation view) (2015). Image courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles. Photo: Brian Forrest.



### Standout artist

## Faith Wilding

2015 saw several banner exhibitions—in Los Angeles at least—spotlighting influential, overlooked, and up-and-coming female artists, from retrospectives of Sturtevant at MOCA and Frances Stark at the Hammer, to François Ghebaly’s (obnoxiously-titled) group show *SOGTFO (Sculpture or Get the Fuck Out)*. But discovering Faith Wilding’s *Fearful Symmetries* at the Armory Center for the Arts was a special thing: a series of beautifully crafted, singularly evocative drawings and installations that felt both timeless and out of time. This, from an artist I only knew from seeing her early performance *Waiting* (1972) on video once at my university library. The editor of this magazine dragged me to the Armory before I could change out of my gym clothes; the last time I wore a tank top in public, but well worth the trip.

Faith Wilding, *Fearful Symmetries* (installation view) (2015–2016). Image courtesy of the artist and Armory Center for the Arts. Photo: Ian Byers-Gamber.

### Album or book

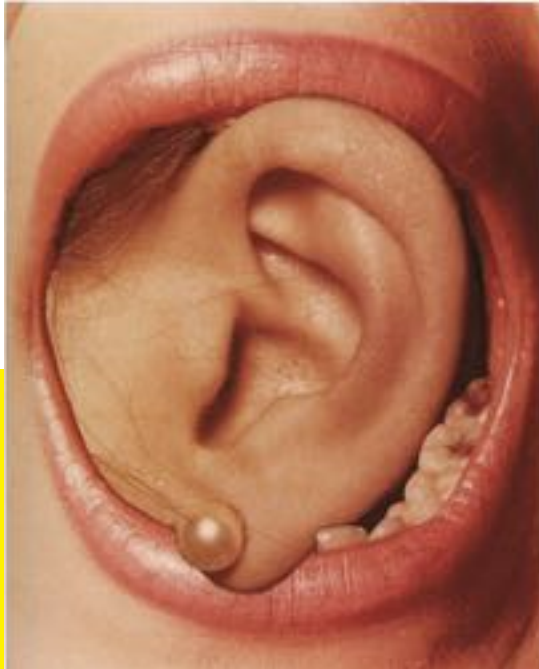
## Perfume Genius, “Fool” from *Too Bright* (2014)

I have a weakness for new age—drones, sustained notes, and the hopelessly delicate. The middle passage of this song, beginning around 1:45, is a shifting, dual crescendo of voice and synthesizer; wordless, somewhere between the end of a yoga class and blinding, pure white light. I tried perhaps too hard in 2015 to time this with poignant moments, if I could see them coming.

# 2016

## Catherine Wagley

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**Carla article**

### **“Interview with Penny Slinger,” Eliza Swann**

**(Carla, issue 8)**

Eliza Swann, whose own work as an artist and teacher I deeply admire, spoke to artist Penny Slinger at the Goddess Temple where Slinger then lived, a home in the redwoods specially built to honor the divine feminine. Slinger has since left the Goddess Temple for the same reasons many artists have since left their homes: financial hardship, rising costs. She spoke to Swann about the difficulty of doing sincerely spiritual, sexual work in the contemporary art world (a dealer had recently told her, of a new series called *Reclaiming Scarlet*, 2016, “It’s very strong and it’s very real, but I don’t know that there’s a market for it”). Such thinking led to our “immature, materialistic society,” Slinger said. “We need to melt the deep freeze of the collective numbness.”

Left: Penny Slinger, *I Hear What you Say* (1973). Collage.  
Image courtesy of the Roland Penrose Collection.

Right: Penny Slinger, *Transmutation of Equatorial forest – The Hermaphrodite* (1969). Photo collage.  
Image courtesy of the artist.



**World event**

## Election of Donald Trump to U.S. presidency

Trump's terrifying election made many of us realize how complacent we'd all been—why were we only outraged now, when there had been so much to outrage us before? Soon after Trump's inauguration, I went to a very strange panel at Art Los Angeles Contemporary, self-importantly titled "Art in the Age of Donald Trump." Mostly it was awkward and half-baked, but painter Christine Wang said some things I still think about. "My paintings can't vote," she acerbically pointed out—being political through art alone would never be enough. "We have a certain kind of organizing debt that we have to pay for," she noted. Trump didn't invent alternative facts and refugee-related policy disasters. "Reagan made up this alternative fact of trickle-down economics," said Wang. "I really hope that we can ride our feeling into action."

**Art world news**

## Boyle Heights protests

Protests of galleries in Boyle Heights began in earnest in September 2016, as certain mid-size galleries that had opened in the 2013–2015 L.A. boom were already losing their spaces thanks to greedy landlords who had only rented to them while waiting for Soho House or Google to arrive in the neighborhood. Evictions of everyone, including artists, became so much more a part of daily conversation. We still have to think and work harder to safeguard the diversity that has made our communities exciting places for both life and art.



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**Album or book**

## *The Dark Tree: Jazz and Community Arts in Los Angeles*, Steven L. Isoardi (2006)

## *Les Guérillères*, Monique Wittig (1969)

I read two books in this time period that I wish I'd read earlier. The first was Steven L. Isoardi's 2006 book, *The Dark Tree: Jazz and Community Arts in Los Angeles*, largely about the virtuoso musician Horace Tapscott's choice to make his art in and for his own community (not for some other global market, or bigger recognition). The second was Monique Wittig's 1969 political novel, *Les Guérillères*, about a feminist commune, the members of which are as militant about their pleasure and togetherness as they are about their revolution.

Elizabeth Blaney speaks during a rally  
on the steps of Nicodim Gallery  
in Boyle Heights. Photo: Matt Stromberg.

# 2017

## Matt Stromberg



### Carla article

## “She Wanted Adventure: Dwan, Butler, Mizuno, Copley,” Catherine Wagley (Carla, issue 10)

Catherine Wagley’s article on these four female gallerists smartly goes beyond the reductive trope of the powerless, overlooked pioneer. Drawing on archival sources and interviews, she documents their historical importance and innovative practices, positing that their absence from the official story may have been in part a result of their subversive strategies that were at odds with both their male counterparts and conventional efforts of historicization.

Top: Virginia Dwan at the exhibition *Language III*, Dwan Gallery, New York (1969). Image courtesy of Dwan Gallery Archive.  
Photo: Roger Prigent.

Bottom: Edward Kienholz, model, Eugenia Butler, and Rudy Gernreich at Eugenia Butler Gallery. Image © Malcolm Lubliner Photography.



### L.A. exhibition

## *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*

(September 2017–  
January 2018)

The Getty’s multi-venue initiative exploring Latin American and Latinx art in Los Angeles offered a refreshing alternative to traditional Eurocentric art historical models. With exhibitions spanning pre-Columbian masterpieces, feminist artists throughout Latin America, and Chicano muralists in L.A., *PST: LA/LA* suggested a reorientation that extended southward, tracing lines of influence across the Americas instead of back to the Old World.

Gustavo di Mario, *Vilmar* from the series *Carnaval* (2005; print 2015). Chromogenic print, 20 × 25 inches. Artwork purchased with funds provided by the Photographs Council.  
© Gustavo di Mario. Image courtesy of The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

**Standout artist**  
**Lauren Halsey**

I first encountered Lauren Halsey's work in *black is a color*, a summer 2017 group show curated by Essence Harden at Charlie James Gallery. Into a grid of white-on-white carved gypsum panels she monumentalized images of black identity: from jazz musicians and the P-Funk Mothership, to Afrofuturist pyramids and elaborate hairstyles, to phrases like "black owned beauty supply" and "here nobody surrenders." Etched into the boards like Egyptian hieroglyphs, the images reflected life as-lived in South L.A., but also viewed it through a celebratory, fantastical lens—a practice she has only made more spectacular in the ensuing three years.



Lauren Halsey, *The Crenshaw District Hieroglyph Project: Tower 1: 20 of 1356* (2017).  
 20 Gypsum panels, 96 × 112.5 inches.  
 Image courtesy of the artist and Charlie James Gallery.  
 Photo: Michael Underwood.



**Art world news**  
**Opening of ICA LA**

Los Angeles has seen its share of institutional art spaces pop up over the past few years. But, unlike glitzy private museums that serve to show off their founders' collections—such as the now-shuttered Marciano Art Foundation, which also opened in 2017—the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles opened in fall 2017 as an independent, non-collecting museum. Not an entirely new museum, the ICA LA has a lengthy history as the reborn Santa Monica Museum, which was founded in 1984 by Elsa Longhauser. Already with an ambitious exhibition history including retrospectives on outsider artist Martín Ramirez, signpainter Norm Laich, and mercurial boundary-pusher Nayland Blake, the ICA LA is proving that the market need not be the only arbiter of curatorial decisions.



# 2018

## Angella d'Avignon

L.A. exhibition

### Jazmin Urrea, *I SAW RED* at SADE

(April 7–May 11, 2018)

Carla article

### “Ingredients for a Braver Art Scene,” Ceci Moss

(Carla, issue 16)

2018 was the year I left Los Angeles, so every art opening, party, and hang out took on an especially sparkly energy for me. I fell in love with everything and everyone in that way you do when you know you're on your way out.

It was also a year of reckoning in the Los Angeles art community: tensions between gallerists and anti-gentrification activists hit a fever pitch and it seemed there was a protest every weekend of summer. Gallerists and artists alike scrambled to reinvent the wheel. Many of these endeavors lead to new and innovative uses of space, like Ceci Moss' mobile GAS Gallery.

Her manifesto-like essay in issue 16 was a call to arms. During my time in L.A., Moss was someone I saw as a sensitive and conscientious titan of the art community and her essay was both a corrective and instruction for how we, a small wavering art world, should act when facing the future.

*I SAW RED* was the immersive installation Los Angeles deserved (in comparison to say, Yayoi Kusama's *Infinity Mirrors*). From floor to ceiling, the gallery walls were plastered in color photographic prints of junk foods prevalent in the low-income South Central neighborhoods where Urrea worked. Starburst, Flamin' Hot Cheetos, Tama Roca Paleta, Jolly Ranchers, and Jabalina papered the walls in nauseating patterns. (In case anyone forgot, the entire floor at SADE was covered in three inches of Flamin' Hot Cheetos.)



Top: Jazmin Urrea, *I SAW RED* (installation view) (2018).  
Image courtesy of the artist and Alberto Cuadros, SADE GALLERY.

Bottom: Jazmin Urrea, *Crazy Rollz Gum* (detail) (2018).  
Xerox print, 17 × 11 inches. Image courtesy of the artist  
and Alberto Cuadros, SADE GALLERY.

## Leroy's Happy Place in Chinatown was the new Hop Louie

We smoked under the fluorescent lights of a low-ceilinged parking garage and all your exes were there. A spare cigarette was a wink away. The bathroom was daunting and the dance floor overflowed into the industrial kitchen. This was Leroy's Happy Place: an abandoned Vietnamese restaurant with everything left intact, turned, overnight, into an art bar helmed by artist Ian James. The pay phone on the wall had no dial tone. The blinds were always drawn. I routinely showed up in a bathrobe draped over my bathing suit after pool parties and stayed way too long. "There were some lovely exhibitions there, and I wish I remembered them," writer Christina Catherine Martinez texted me recently. "It felt like the last heterogeneous social imperative that brought different circles of the L.A. art world together before the ever-expanding archipelago of 'spaces' dotted across Los Angeles and coalesced into more definitive cliques." All that's to say: everyone hung out there and no one was turned away.

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### Standout artist Trulee Hall

I had the pleasure of visiting Trulee Hall's studio while she was preparing for a full gallery installation at Maccarone—she was in the final stages of a sprawling, multimedia solo exhibition months before it was expected. I was floored by her warmth, candor, and vulnerability, as well as her aesthetic and technical prowess. She was primed for the spotlight, and it's still well deserved. The Maccarone show was a breakout hit; Hall was and is the woman to watch.

Trulee Hall, *Golden Corn Entryway with Boob Fountain* (2018). Gold leaf, styrofoam, wood, carpet, fish rocks, papier-mâché, ceramic, acrylic, and fountain, 115 × 362 × 66 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Maccarone Gallery.



The bar at Leroy's Happy Place. Photo: Angella d'Avignon.

# 2019

Jessica Simmons

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**Carla article**  
**“Putting Aesthetics  
to Hope,”**  
**Catherine Wagley**  
(*Carla*, issue 18)

I found one of the most engaging articles of 2019 to be Catherine Wagley’s examination of work by Carmen Winant in relation to the womyn’s land movements of the ’70s and ’80s. Her essay coalesced around questions crucial to both photography and feminism—invoking gaze, authorship, intimacy, and agency—while also suggesting the limitations of a feminism that isn’t wholly intersectional.

Honey Lee Cottrell.  
Image courtesy of the Division of Rare  
and Manuscript Collections,  
Cornell University Library.



## Album or book

### ***Slave Play*, Jeremy O. Harris (2018)**

One of the most memorable and thought-provoking pieces of media that I experienced in 2019 was a Broadway play: Jeremy O. Harris' *Slave Play*, which presented a biting, lurid, disturbing, and uncomfortable visualization of the ways in which the poisonous legacy of antebellum slave/master power dynamics can silently infiltrate modern interracial relationships. It offered a sharp reminder that all white people—even romantic partners, family members, and progressive allies of people of color—are implicated in the disease of white supremacy.

## L.A. exhibition

### **Tatsumi Hijikata and Eikoh Hosoe: Collaborations with Tatsumi Hijikata at Nonaka-Hill**

**(October 12–November 30, 2019)**

This exhibition was a perfectly poetic and subtly haunting exploration of Hijikata's work as the avant-garde pioneer of butoh (a form of dance that evokes the body as a mutable site of passion, violence, genesis, and decay) as well as his filmic and photographic collaborations with Eikoh Hosoe. (*Navel and A-Bomb*, 1960, is particularly unforgettable). I found it wildly refreshing to see a contemporary gallery execute a thoughtful exhibition of such dark, strange, and vivid work, which remains largely unfamiliar to American audiences.



Eikoh Hosoe, *Navel and A-Bomb* (video still) (1960). 20 minutes. © Eikoh Hosoe. Image courtesy of Taka Ishii Gallery Photography / Film, Tokyo, and Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles.

## Art world news

### **Art workers unionize**

Two of the most notable local art world events of 2019—the successful unionization of MOCA employees and the attempted unionization of Marciano Art Foundation employees (which spurred the Marcianos to abruptly shutter the museum)—reflected larger national debates, highlighting deepening divisions over workers' rights and echoing growing calls for institutional transparency and accountability. The pandemic that as-of-then did not exist has only made these issues more urgent and acute—when the world opens again, it will be telling to see where the chips fall.

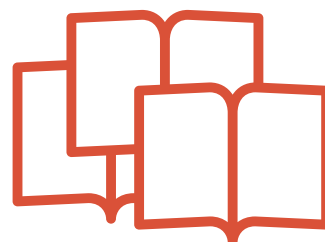
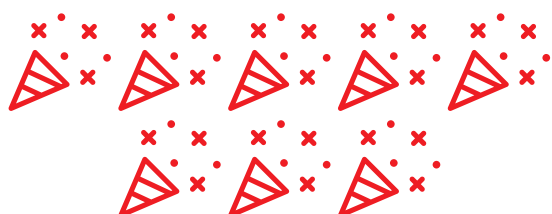


**21**  
PODCAST  
EPISODES



**18**

LAUNCH  
PARTIES



**25**

LIBRARIES/COLLECTIONS

## *Carla by the Numbers*

**98**

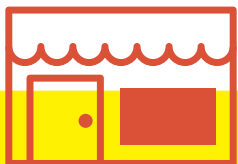
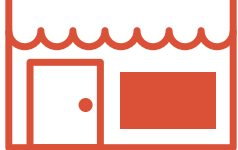
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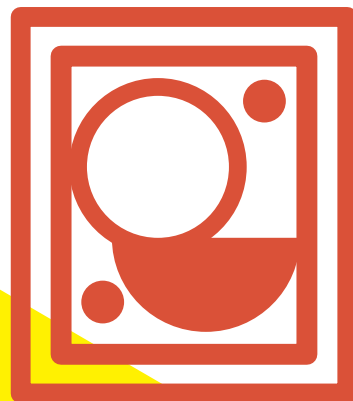
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VENUES  
COVERED

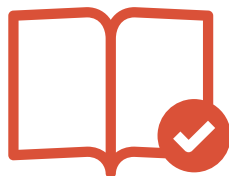
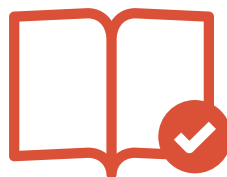
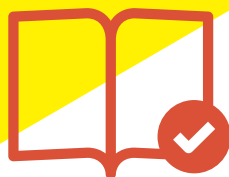
**1,243**  
ARTISTS COVERED



Over the past five years, we've launched a print magazine, published weekly online reviews, started a podcast, and held a launch party for almost every published issue. This is *Carla's* coverage by the numbers.



**331**  
SNAP  
REVIEWS



**594**  
ARTICLES







Since the statewide shelter-in-place, I've been hosting regular Instagram Live interviews with artists and gallerists in our community. This format began as a scramble of sorts—an attempt to offer direct communication with our audience in real-time... all from my living room.

I kicked things off with a staggering three interviews per week—the excitement of the idea prompted a bit of manic energy—soon pushed it back to two, and have finally landed on a feasible schedule of one interview per week.

Each conversation is a reminder that we are all isolated together, experiencing semi-parallel realities. Our guests have delved into their coping strategies and adapted art practices, undertaken new community projects, and imagined what future support structures for

artists might look like. Some are diligently making art, others can't get into the studio. Some are planting gardens, others are dreaming about the cosmos. What follows are a selection of condensed conversations from a handful of our recent guests: part therapy, part art talk, and part forward-looking.

Join our conversation in real-time every Friday at 5:30 pm PST @contemporaryartreview.la and read the full transcripts at contemporaryartreview.la.

Past guests: Molly Surazhsky, Diedrick Brackens, Allison Miller, Emma Gray, Julia Haft-Candell, Ry Rocklen, Hunter Shaw, Paul Mpagi Sepuya, Lita Albuquerque, Alison Saar, Amy Bessone, Katy Cowan, and more to come...

Allison Miller, *Shield* (2019).  
Acrylic and oil stick on canvas.  
Height: 73 inches, width: 63 inches (top), 73 inches (bottom).  
Image courtesy of the artist and The Pit.

# Diedrick Brackens

**Lindsay Preston Zappas:** So how are you doing?

**Diedrick Brackens:** I feel... a mix of things—like [I'm going] from one great feeling to a nervous, anxiety-ridden day. I've had two shows canceled, some talks, and all these other things. There's a natural way when you start preparing for a show, that you sort of fill up all this energy and rush to get the work done. And now that it's all on hold, I have this kind of pent-up energy...

I'm sitting, in this moment, watching the world burn, and I feel like being more exact and clear about what our terms are—what we want, especially as we go forward and start making art that touches on this moment. I'm also reminding myself: "what are the things that you wanted to say and do with this gift—the skill that you have?" And that's been really important in helping me calm down.

**LPZ:** This is such a big question, but with so many of us in the arts in this precarious position: What do you think we need to do right now as a community?

**DB:** This is the first moment I've ever thought that in a very real and not abstract way, "what if I can't pay my bills? What if the art does not continue to sell... or the art of my peers?" It really starts [with] thinking about how pitched the art world is to this one particular model of sustaining itself. I start thinking about what institutions can do, and what artists can do as they collaborate

with each other to sustain themselves financially. I don't think most artists want to live in a world that's chained to capitalism, but we unfortunately do.

**LPZ:** It's a really unique moment... to be able to unearth other models and start from scratch. I'm curious how some of this innovation might stick.

**DB:** I don't think it's doing away with being able to make a living by selling objects. But, when those [models] arrive, how then will artists be compensated for their time and their energy and their ideas? Especially as the new normal is moving to digital platforms, how does someone make three-dimensional objects and participate in that space?

**LPZ:** Are you thinking about the role of an artist during this time in a large-scale way?

**DB:** [I strongly feel that] everyone needs to continue with the work that they feel passionate about, whether that has a direct relationship to [what's going on] or not. The things that people are talking about and thinking about matter, and will be important to someone in the future to see. So...go back to what your mission is. Like, why you were an artist in the first place. And I think that that answer for folks hopefully will be there, as opposed to the knee-jerk response that you have to respond to this thing [as it's happening].

**LPZ:** It mirrors certain conversations that we were having when Trump got elected. I feel like a lot of artists were like, "do I need to make political work now? Does my art need to change? Do I need to address this in my work?"

**DB:** After he was elected, I was sort of like, "what is there to lose? I'm just going to say the things that I want to or need to." And I think maybe there's a similar outcome here.

**[Read the full interview](#)**

# Amy Bessone

**Lindsay Preston Zappas:** How has isolation been for you? Are you making work?

**Amy Bessone:** Starting mid-March, I was going to turn inward a little... I didn't expect it to be this...

I was talking to someone the other day who studies the brain... when we're faced with something that feels very threatening, we revert to the most primitive part of our brain, where all the fight and flight stuff is. It allows us to focus on the very immediate threat and the things right in front of us. The first days after the shutdown, I was manically cleaning and stocking the pantry...

**LPZ:** You were in two group shows that are closed or in stasis, like technically open, but closed. The thesis around one of them, *Demifigures*, was about this in-between space... I feel like we're in that now.

**AB:** The painting [of mine] that comes to mind in particular is *Between Two Banks*... That painting was related to a text I read when I was in a tremendous amount of despair... [It] said something along the lines of, "being at a place where you are unable to believe in the possibility of change and unable to go on as you had before." That's what I really felt at the time. I was stuck...

**LPZ:** Maybe this is a good segue into your postcards that you've been making in a project called *Pandemic Postcards*.

**AB:** This was all on Instagram... Recently I pulled a few boxes out of storage and re-discovered hundreds of postcards I've collected over decades. They are an autobiography of sorts. With my first half-century very nearly behind me, [now] seems like as good a day as any to start using them.

**LPZ:** Your impulse to chart or to create a certain calendar during this time is appealing.

**AB:** It is certainly shocking. I think I'm on [postcard] number 44 now... [The project] is an opportunity to reflect on past experiences, sometimes write about them, and also look into art history... The oldest postcard I found so far was a de Kooning hanging in my high school locker.

[The postcards bring] up these questions of "who gets to depict whom? Who gets depicted? How do they get depicted?" There is a lack of diversity in my postcard collection.

**LPZ:** These postcards mirror the inequities in our art world and history, which ties back into the work you're doing with the figure.

**AB:** What's interesting to me about the [postcards On Kawara wrote] is that they reveal almost nothing about him personally. I thought about how [my project] is a very personal thing. It's very vulnerable, awkward, and revelatory in a way that I'm not necessarily comfortable with.

**LPZ:** Do you feel like you're getting to that front-place of your brain and creating room for yourself in the studio?

**AB:** There was that initial shock and visceral response to the [pandemic], and then I really got my head together... First and foremost, I have to make work for myself, and then figure out the next steps as things unfold and as we gather more information.

**[Read the full interview](#)**



# Julia Haft-Candell

**Lindsay Preston Zappas:** What has your routine been like the last couple of weeks?

**Julia Haft-Candell:** I'm a really routine-oriented person, and [coronavirus] has obviously changed my whole routine, so that has been weird. I'm a part-time professor at USC in ceramics. The teaching has been a big part of [my routine]. But besides that, I've been trying to go to the studio... trying to create structure. Structure and space.

It's been really nice to have the time and quiet, but I realized through this that it's not enough to just have the studio and the time. I think I thought maybe that if I had all this time in the studio and no one to distract me, that it would be great—and it is. But also I really felt something spiritually missing, and I realized [that before], I was interacting with people and showing my work to people in a one-on-one way. I guess I hadn't realized how much that was helping me or sustaining me, or just making me think—spiritually giving me some sort of thing that I needed.

**LPZ:** How have you found ways to do that now?

**JHC:** Now, I'm thinking about... what can I do to, in this different kind of space, try to make connections between the community or in the community? And so I decided I'll just reach out and try to do Zoom visits...

I try to remember that ultimately artists have to be optimistic, because otherwise what would keep you making

work if you weren't hoping for something? Even if it's in a dark place of making work.

I really believe in one-on-one, in-person interactions—that's everything with teaching and making. But in the circumstances, we're creatively problem-solving and I think it's nice to see how different people do that.

**LPZ:** You're such a hands-on maker and clay is such a physical medium. Is that fulfilling some of this connection that we're talking about?

**JHC:** There is a therapeutic aspect to it that I love. I've been thinking about the slowing down that this time encourages as being all the more reason to kind of slow down in my studio.

**LPZ:** I was going to ask you if you felt like this time has kind of shifted what you're making, but maybe that's part of it.

**JHC:** My work recently has brought together this really slow, tedious stuff, but also combined with an expressive, very hands-on, mushy quickness... I love the idea that your feelings can be in your work. I feel like now I'm just kind of embracing it, going in and being like, "this is all my feelings, all there," and just standing by it.

**LPZ:** Do you have any other thoughts on... what we need to be doing or seeing right now?

**JHC:** I've been trying to remember that it doesn't matter, this idea of productivity... we don't have to be productive just because we have time.

My friend Allison was giving me a pep talk the other day, just saying that there's no right way to do this, and maybe that's [similar to what it's like] being an artist. There's no right way, and we all have to figure it out, how it works best for us, and find people that we can commiserate with.

**[Read the full interview](#)**



Top: Diedrick Brackens, *darling divined* (installation view) (2019). Image courtesy of the artist and The New Museum.  
Photo: Dario Lasagni.



Bottom left: Pandemic Postcards. Images courtesy of Amy Bessone.

Bottom right: Julia Haft-Candell, *Interlocking Arch* (2019). Ceramic, 52.5 x 38 x 19 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Parrasch Heijnen.



Paul Mpagi Sepuya, *A conversation around pictures*  
(1090454) (2019). Archival pigment print,  
45 × 34 inches. Image courtesy of the artist  
and Vielmetter Los Angeles.

# Ry Rocklen

**Lindsay Preston Zappas: How are you doing? You just had a baby! And a big move as well?**

**Ry Rocklen:** We've been great—the baby is amazing. His name is Mika. He was born February 12th.

Back in 2016, [my wife] Carolyn and I bought a house here in Joshua Tree that we decorated with wall-to-wall *Trophy Modern* furnishings.

Years ago, in 2012, I was working on a sculpture made out of all of these found trophies. I had this idea that it would be great to make furniture out of trophy parts. It just was one of those silly ideas that snowballed into...

**LPZ: —your house?**

**RR:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly, into an entire home.

**LPZ: We're all in this isolating time—are you thinking about how that might affect your work going forward? I feel like there's a sort of communal aspect to your *Food Group* project.**

**RR:** [By] casting my friends and my gallerist... I wanted there to be a specificity in the people that were in the costumes to offset the generic quality of the food. I think there is a storytelling that goes on, which has become a big part of *Food Group* [project] going forward.

**LPZ: I love the idea of the contrast between the generic object and the super personal... It reminds me**

**too of your house right now—these trophies are the most generic, standard thing, but then you're raising your baby in that space.**

**RR:** I didn't anticipate raising a baby on the *Trophy Modern* furniture, but that's where we're at now. There's a lot of corners that need to get baby-proofed at some point when he starts walking.

I often give the example of...

Warhol pointing to the Coke can and saying, "this Coke can is the same Coke can that you can buy, that everybody can buy"... For me, it was always like, "no, this Coke can is different from yours. The print is slightly offset; there's a dent in the side; I pulled the tab off." [There's] specificity in the serialized object and a kind of celebration in find[ing] that difference. That sentiment kind of permeates the practice in different ways.

**LPZ: There's a shared experience being in this social isolation, but it's such an individual reality at the same time.**

**RR:** That's always been something I've been struck by—feeling alone in my experience, and then once you start to reach out, you realize that everyone's kind of feeling the same way as you. I think that's a classic aspect of the human condition.

Going forward after this, I think it'll be an even different landscape... the idea of finding your own space to do shows... making work not necessarily with some high-profile exhibition in mind but because you really want to and can't not. In terms of community... it's going to be something that I'm going to be looking for in my life. We're all clamoring to just go to a museum again, go outside on the street... What an interesting moment to be in for us all.

**LPZ: I know. And your baby! These are his first moments—that's a crazy origin story.**

**RR:** Yeah, we'll have a story to tell him for sure.

**[Read the full interview](#)**



# Paul Mpagi Sepuya

**Lindsay Preston Zappas:** I'm so curious to talk to you, specifically because you have a major solo show up right now... as all of this is happening.

**Paul Mpagi Sepuya:** You work on a show for so long, a body of work, and then everything—it's in limbo. Fortunately, there's the idea that it can stay on view for whenever things open up, and then it will get its chance to be seen. I think the most exciting thing, for me, is that it's the first time that I will have ever had a solo show where I live. I was just so excited to be able to go see the show, and walk through with friends, and live with it.

**LPZ:** I wanted to talk to you about this body of work in particular, and the physicality and materiality of it.

**PMS:** The scale is so important. I'm thinking about [the works] in terms of the scale of what's represented in the image, almost like a sculptural relationship to the apparatus—the idea of the viewer being implicated by the device that's turned on them, but also paradoxically closed off.

**LPZ:** I think what's really interesting are the iPhones in this work and that surface we see coming back at us.

**PMS:** The idea for the show came from some outtakes I had of a friend taking some selfies in between me figuring out [a] setup. For the Whitney Biennial... I think a lot of people thought I was presenting my work, but I was

presenting the work of friends who had been making photographs alongside me.

**LPZ:** So much of the work, too, feels collaborative. It feels really community-oriented.

**PMS:** There's an interdependence... Nothing is staged. If you see a camera apparatus, that is that friend [making a photograph]. If you see someone else handling material or an object, that is actually happening. If you see a phone, it is also making images.

The cell phones always pointed toward a circulation outside of the images. They were kind of the way out, because those images could circulate on Instagram, or [in] text messages—and that's the thing that you can't see when you see the show digitally. In those little cell phone screens, they sometimes reveal our faces which might be turned from my camera, or they reveal a wider aspect of the setup.

**LPZ:** Are you making art right now?

**PMS:** No. Everyone's just scrambling. Every gallery is scrambling, artists are just trying to find ways to stay connected. There hasn't really been much free time, or maybe there has been—no, honestly, it's been overwhelming. I'm not making [much] work.

**LPZ:** Is there anything that you're doing that provides some peace for you?

**PMS:** We've been doing a lot of walking and cooking. I never realized how much time having to cook every meal takes up, you know? This afternoon, we took a four-and-a-half mile walk after the rain. I kind of like these rainy days, because you don't feel guilty for staying inside.

**Read the full interview**

# Lita Albuquerque

**Lindsay Preston Zappas: What are some of your major thoughts right now?**

**Lita Albuquerque:** I've really come to the same conclusion as a lot of thinkers, that we are indeed the virus on the earth. This pause has given us a little something to think about, that we are, in fact, affecting [the earth] in a very big way, and not such a positive way. The virus is real. It's not a joke, and it's really scary, but who we are—it's just as scary.

**LPZ: How do you approach those thoughts without it being super nihilistic and negative?**

**LA:** One of the things we've learned in quarantine is how incredibly interconnected we are... I've had this project I want to do, which is impossible: when I wake up in the morning, I'm in my bed. I open my eyes, and I think of all the people that have gotten me to this place where I can have this moment. Where do you start? I mean, who we are at this moment, that's on the human level. If we could really see that... If you could take that model... and expand it into the universe, that's the connection. That's not nihilistic; that's incredibly positive.

**LPZ: How do you deal with people that see the world differently?**

**LA:** I always think... if you speak from the heart to the heart, it usually opens people [up]. That tends to be my *modus operandi*. But we're so divided that we

don't speak to one another. That's, perhaps, the first thing we need to start thinking about—how to do that.

[Avoiding the conversation] is not the way to go. I think that's the issue. We have to [have] that conversation somehow.

We're up against the wall soon, politically. I do believe in the power of art, and in fact, one of the things that saved me out of the craziness of what happened with the fire was art, being able to make art.

**LPZ: Your home and studio (and archives) were burnt down in the Woolsey Fire last year. How has that experience been a precursor for our current moment as far as having to invite that energy of chaos into your life?**

**LA:** It does prepare you for anything to happen... You become a warrior. It's not easy, but you're a warrior. You connect with your elemental self. I was teaching at Art Center in Pasadena, and I was coming home and I heard that the fire was really close to our house. I really have a thing about books and my library... In my head at that time, I knew [they] had burned down, and I thought, "oh my god, my library, my library." In one moment, I shifted and understood that I had the elemental self, and that was still intact.

You become a warrior, and that doesn't mean you don't have fear, and that you don't have grief, and that you don't have those emotions and feelings. So we're all here now, and we do have each other, and we're connected. It's a very interesting place to be.

**Read the full interview**



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Top: Ry Rocklen's *Trophy Modern* house in Joshua Tree.  
Image courtesy of Ry Rocklen.

Bottom: Lita Albuquerque, *NAJMA (She Placed One Thousand Suns Over the Transparent Overlays of Space)* (2020). Pigment, aluminum.  
AlUla, Saudi Arabia. Image courtesy of the artist.  
Photo: Lance Gerber.

## Michael Rey at Philip Martin Gallery

February 29, 2019–  
May 2, 2020

The last show I was able to see in person was Michael Rey's most recent selection of sleek monochrome paintings at Philip Martin Gallery. Like his earlier works made with oil and plasticine clay, these paintings on strangely-shaped panels are made by molding their surfaces with his fingers and slowly spreading the paint in a meditative manner. The gradual progressions and transitions within each work, and his practice in general, recall the studio moves of methodical modernists like Ellsworth Kelly, Robert Mangold, and Brice Marden. But Rey's works are moodier and more intuitive than most of his antecedents. There is some spunk and funk to the forms—and some dark, irascible energy to some of them, too—but they are also quite self-restrained; they never seem to go off the deep end.

Yet, in the weeks since I saw Rey's newest paintings, as the United States has scrambled to soften the harsh effects of a global pandemic, it's felt as though we have collectively gone off the deep end, and my interpretation of the work has somewhat shifted. Before, these paintings appeared to be more about art—cleverly and coyly functioning in their own sophisticated milieu. Now, they feel much more sincere and vulnerable, just like the way that real-life concerns now dramatically

overshadow the niche concerns of the art world.

The long, skinny, anatomical *Yavy-Yavy* (all works 2020) immediately calls to mind a spine, further referencing not only the fragility of art and life, but the backbone required to create and care for them. The slightly raised spiderweb on the deep, shiny black *ZOPTUN (Astrolopico)* feels like a metaphor for the insidious structures that our economy is built on, which ensnare and prey upon us. Within this context, the hole in each of the piece's four corners might point out the flaws of capitalism, and the green peeking through the black paint might expose the natural greed of the predators within these systems. It's possible I'm reading too much into this painting, but it's hard not to spiral into such a bleak zone when the candidate who has clearly fought the hardest for *all* Americans was just snubbed for the second time in fewer than five years. Perhaps the most profound piece of the lot is *Klodafhass*, a stretched-out, creamy, sterile composition—its shape a bizarre amalgamation resembling a butterfly, clocks, scissors, and telephone receivers all collapsed into one smooth plane. Looking at it now, I imagine the suffocated emotions of an emergency room, that continue on, regardless of the day's hour.

Abstraction has long been seen as a blank slate onto which we are supposedly able to project our own ideas or values. I would argue that abstract art is actually most useful when it operates more like a window, through which the viewer can see another person's ideas and values and respond accordingly. In the

midst of this crisis, where we're all stuck in homes or hospitals for the foreseeable future, Rey's open-ended works likely hit too close to home; through their subjectivity, they project our worst fears back to us. Maybe we could all use some literal and figurative windows these days.

## Alex Anderson at Gavlak

March 14–June 11, 2020

Alex Anderson's exhibition of 21 ceramic sculptures, dramatically lit and arranged on pink pedestals—with additional low reliefs hanging from the gallery's white walls—is an oblique counter-narrative to the conventions of European decorative arts. At first glance, one might mistake the glazed earthenware for porcelain, or the elaborate ornamentation for a shallow embrace of Western aesthetics. Coyishly deflecting such presumptions, Anderson's exhibition title, *Little Black Boy Makes Imperial Porcelains*, is a tongue-in-cheek description of the artist and his practice. By interweaving anthropomorphic allegory, proficient craftsmanship, and sly wordplay in his titles, Anderson spotlights his experience as a gay, Asian-African American, decidedly de-flaking the crustiness of the Western ceramic tradition.

In the work *Losing Face* (2019), a white mask molded from the artist's face (reminiscent of Roman funerary masks) slips down the surface of a framed, mirror-shaped relief to reveal a frowning character in blackface. For this work, Anderson painted exaggerated lips, stunned eyes, and a black





Michael Rey, *Dis Zutoume!* (2020).  
Oil on panel, 58 × 40 inches. Image courtesy  
of the artist and Philip Martin Gallery.

background using a loose, brushy style adapted from East Asian painting. As with most every work in the show, he counterbalances baroque decorative motifs, like flower petals and leaves, with three-dimensional emojis that adorn his sculptures as digital punctuations. In this case, a large drop of blue sweat hangs from the black-face character's forehead, suggesting internal anxiety about being reduced to a stereotype. In *Disposable Light* (2020), a white hand grasps the end of a matchstick, which at its tip displays a drooling blackface character with x\_x eyes and a gold-lustered fire emoji blazed into its head. The sculpture evokes the terror of being easily burned by the hands of white power, if perhaps a bit directly.

Anderson's skill for embellishing historical symbols of racial violence with imitative elegance and a baroque sensibility, along with the pictorial language of contemporary emojis, is uncomfortably tantalizing. In *Pearanoia* (2019), the disembodied white hand reappears, this time grasping for a small, sweating black pear hanging from a white serpentine branch that oozes gold droplets. Like Nina Simone comparing the scent of Magnolia to that of burning flesh, Anderson's sculptures resonate because of their masterful absurdity; they employ imperial aesthetics to upstage power at its most violent.

## *All of Them Witches* at Jeffrey Deitch

February 8–  
April 11, 2020

"Is this serious or just pretend?" It's a question that propels the drama of *Rosemary's Baby* and haunts Jeffrey Deitch's *All of Them Witches*, a group show organized by artist Laurie Simmons and curator Dan Nadel that draws its name from the film. In a pivotal scene, Rosemary hides in a phonebooth and whispers, "All of them, all in it together. All of them witches," underlining the life-altering consequences of whether or not people believe her. According to the gallery text, the show is less interested in these "real-practice" occult traditions than in their "aesthetic influence," ultimately neglecting the diverse spiritual and religious traditions the artists in the show are engaged in. Are all of them witches? Like the haunted house soundtrack washing over the gallery, this show doesn't seem to know or care.

The artworks are crowded on the walls, a *horror vacui* with repeating themes throughout. Many works depict enchanted landscapes: the murky waters of Allison Janae Hamilton's *Floridawater* photographs (2019) suspend figures in ethereal postures and tree limbs splay across a fire-orange sky in Austé's acrylic painting *An Hour of Ten Signs* (1981). Others reclaim the home as a site of sexual empowerment—such as the oil painting *Fireplace* (2010) by Lisa Yuskavage, where female figures pose

self-assuredly for the imagined viewer, rejecting the passivity of the reclining nude. Ariana Papademetropoulos' archive of vintage pulp paperbacks, *Women Running Away From Houses* (2020), doesn't quite match the seriousness of these other works, where boundaries of body and world become porous, enticing with potential transformation.

Other works focus directly on animal-human relationships, ancient mythologies and campy fun flattened into the same space. Where the queenly figure in Renate Druks' painting *Spring Fever* (1979) seems to absorb the energies of the feline at her feet into her body, the format of Carolee Schneemann's *Infinity Kisses* (1990–1998)—serialized photographs of the artist kissing her cat—seems more selfie than séance. Likewise, Marnie Weber's intentionally garish *Witch Totem* (2016) and works like Judy Chicago's *Bast*, *The Egyptian Cat Goddess* (2001) seem weakened by the presence of one another, where "witchy" tries to describe both playing dress-up and recovering traditions of the past.

More explicitly engaging ritual objects and traditions, Guadalupe Maravilla's *Disease Thrower #3* (2019), is a sculptural installation that recontextualizes headdresses and musical instruments as an Aztec-inflected site of healing. Shirin Neshat's black and white photograph *My House Is on Fire* (2012) shows Islamic scripture inscribed over a male torso, scarring the body. In Celeste Dupuy-Spencer's painting, *And the Kingdom is Here* (2020), mythical deer-like animals enter a modern church service housed in a converted

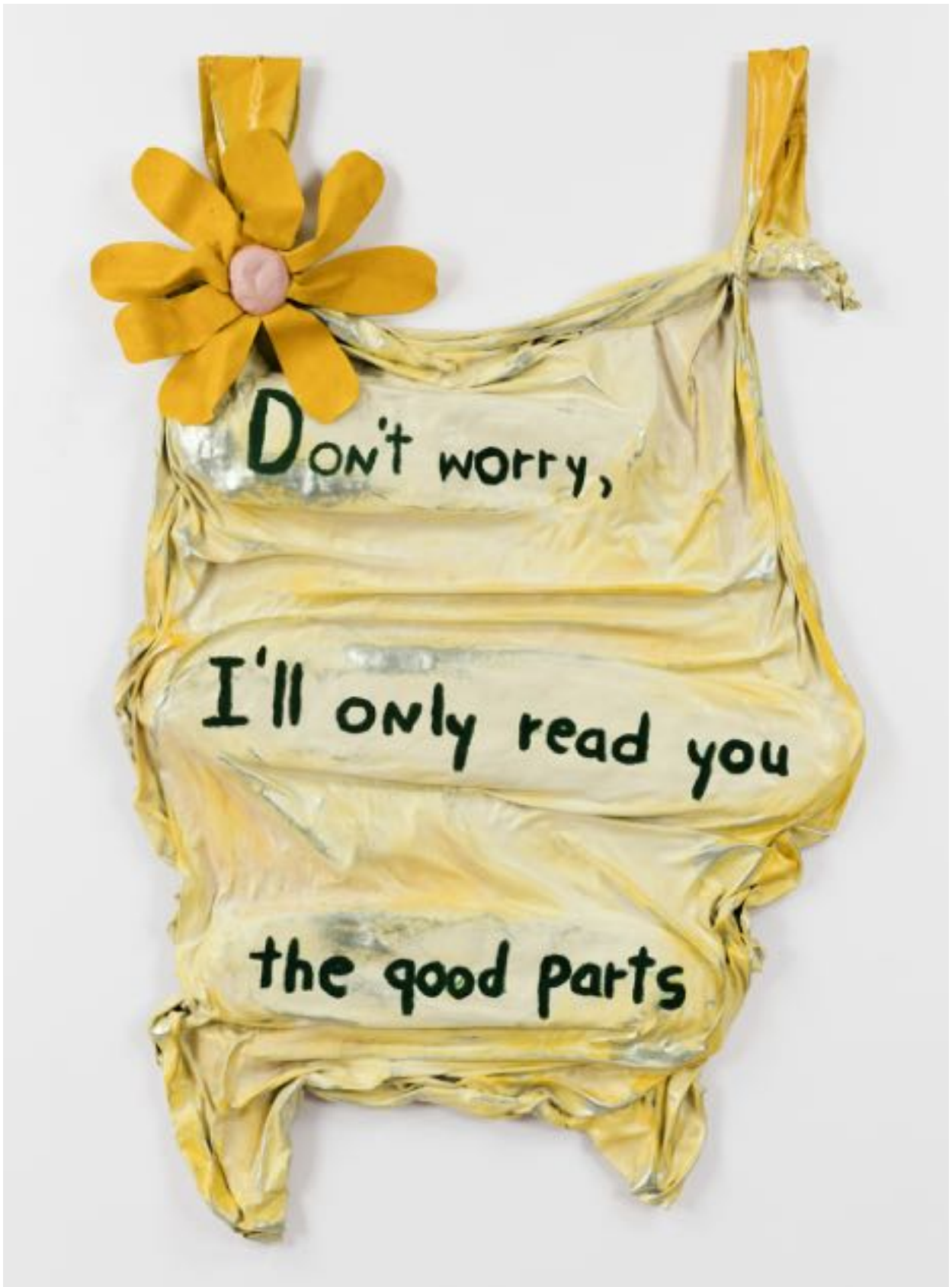


Alex Anderson, *Losing Face* (2019).  
Earthenware, glaze, and gold luster, 21 x 14 x 5 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and  
Gavlak Los Angeles.



*All of Them Witches*  
(installation view) (2020). Image courtesy  
of the artists and Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles.  
Photo: Joshua White.





Ree Morton, *Don't worry, I'll only read you the good parts* (1975). Oil on celastic, 54 x 26 inches.  
Collection of Gail and Tony Ganz.  
© The Estate of Ree Morton; courtesy Alexander and Bonin, New York. Photo: Joerg Lohse.

cathedral, overlapping complex Christian histories with animism. Here and elsewhere, these artworks can transfix viewers with more religious literacy—not less.

All of these works and more negotiate boundaries of the human and more-than-human world in sophisticated ways, locating the show squarely in dialogue with subjects that its hands-off hanging style and gallery text actively avoid. More often than not, this “witchy sensibility” obscures the religious and spiritual concerns animating the works themselves, leaving viewers to sort out the real from make-believe on their own. Ironically, this show seems spooked by its own depths.

## Ree Morton at ICA LA

February 16–  
June 14, 2020

Ree Morton’s idiosyncratic objects are defiant. They are not so much painting, sculpture, drawing, or found objects, but constellations of framing devices that move between more traditional art forms. *The Plant That Heals May Also Poison*, the historically significant survey of Morton’s work at ICA LA, reminded me of the recent book *Females* by Andrea Long Chu. A contemporary critic and writer, Chu’s radical debut posits that “everyone is female and everyone hates it.”<sup>1</sup> For Chu, female identity is ontological and not biological, defined by “any psychic operation in which the self is sacrificed to make room for the desires of another.”<sup>2</sup> Morton, a mother of three,

made her now acclaimed feminist work for a brief decade before her untimely death at age 40 in 1977. Perhaps reflective of her deferment of artistic life for motherhood for many years, Morton’s artworks indicate a similar displacement of an autonomous self to create space for others. These others are represented in different systems—botany, cartography, written language—which are conjoined in the semi-private vessel that is her artwork.

Creating visual, linguistic, and conceptual containers from varied sources, the works in Morton’s retrospective demonstrate a preoccupation with the fluidity of boundaries. This can be seen in early works, such as *Game Map Drawing I–VI* (ca. 1972–73), which demarcates space with solid or dotted lines. A recurring motif, these dotted lines not only indicate a fluid boundary, but a shape contained within another shape. *Bozeman, Montana* (1974)—the title taken from where Morton was teaching at the time—is a wallwork in the shape of large parenthesis constructed from lightbulbs mounted on painted and flocked wood. The circle formed by each half-circle holds boldface words made from rippling, sculpted celastic (plastic-impregnated fabric), flocking, glitter, and paint. Held in tension, each word refers to people and experiences meaningful to Morton, such as “Mike” (the name of a former student), “pool,” “sky,” and “fish.”

Repeated visual elements, such as theater curtains, ribbons, and proper nouns, act as navigational symbols, indicating the ways that the artworks function as

receptacles with open boundaries. The open curtains in *Let Us Celebrate While Youth Lingers and Ideas Flow* (1975) indicate the potential separation of the subject from the space of the viewer. *Maternal Instincts* (1974), another celastic wallwork, is an enlarged upside-down horseshoe reminiscent of a prize ribbon won at a fair. Like two descending arms that hold Morton’s children, three smaller celastic ribbons are topped with their initials and a lightbulb. Several pieces (*Beaux*, 1974–1975), conflate the singular (a ribbon) with its dual image in sculptural form. The two ribbon ends intertwine, mirror, and double back, reflecting the intertwined and sometimes contradictory convolutions inherent in mapping the relationship between self and other.

Morton’s objects hold others within them, depicting a self that is paradoxically construed through encompassing others’ desires. An outlier during her brief artistic life, her work spoke to experiences of femaleness generally disdained by the male-centered art world. *The Plant That Heals* can be read as an antecedent to the kind of deep, generative complications that Chu, a radical queer thinker, articulates in dialogue with histories of femaleness, new and old.

1. Chu, Andrea Long. *Females*. London: Verso, 2019. p 11.

2. Ibid, 11.

## Rodrigo Valenzuela at Klowden Mann

February 29–May 23, 2020

Rodrigo Valenzuela's photographs not only look old but also were made using a pre-film process of photo-making called photogravure, which lends rich, grey-sepia tones to the prints, giving them an august air. His current exhibition at Klowden Mann, *Journeyman*, features eight of these prints from his *Stature* series, each capturing an assortment of abstract, concrete forms stacked on one another. The function of the photographed assemblages is unclear, though they resemble stark Soviet monuments or perhaps outdated industrial machinery. The press release likens these works to an exploration of "the discards and inversions of capitalist endeavor," but our reading need not be so specific, as Valenzuela's photographs, like the accompanying sculptures in the show, cause uncertainty on many levels.

Though it is impossible to detect this from the images, Valenzuela made his photographed ad-hoc sculptures by casting discarded packaging. Since he carefully balances each element before taking the photo, with nothing physically holding the pieces together, the stability of his subjects is also an illusion. Through the artifice of his trash-can minimalism, he upends both our assumptions about venerable stone monuments and the veracity of photography. In mimicking the language of documentary photography, Valenzuela

exposes the medium's artifice while also producing images of seductive beauty. For instance, the concrete forms in *Stature No. 8* (2020) together resemble a pre-Columbian carving resting on a modern pipe fitting, a marriage of industry and antiquity replicated in cheap styrofoam.

The photographs are accompanied by modestly-sized monochromatic ceramic sculptures that continue Valenzuela's infatuation with ambiguity. Resembling architectural models, they are inset into a raised plywood floor built for the show, so that viewers must stoop to inspect them. Some resemble engine parts, while others recall miniature freeways or stadiums. Valenzuela has previously discussed how his works reflect his experience growing up in Chile during Pinochet's reign. With that in mind, these architectural forms take on a potentially sinister air as emblems of state repression—their black, unresolved geometries alluding perhaps to the failures of utopian modernism. They look almost familiar, projecting a kind of near-recognition that proves more unsettling than total abstraction.

Valenzuela's autobiography (he worked in construction early in his art career) informs his work's exploration of identity, labor, class, and authority. Two films play in the back gallery, one of which (*Prole*, 2015) depicts a group of Latino workers discussing union efforts. It's verbal explanation, however, pinpoints the context of the exhibition toward a specific labor issue, and lacks the intriguing nuance of the sculptures and photographs, which

are so engaging because of their ambivalence.

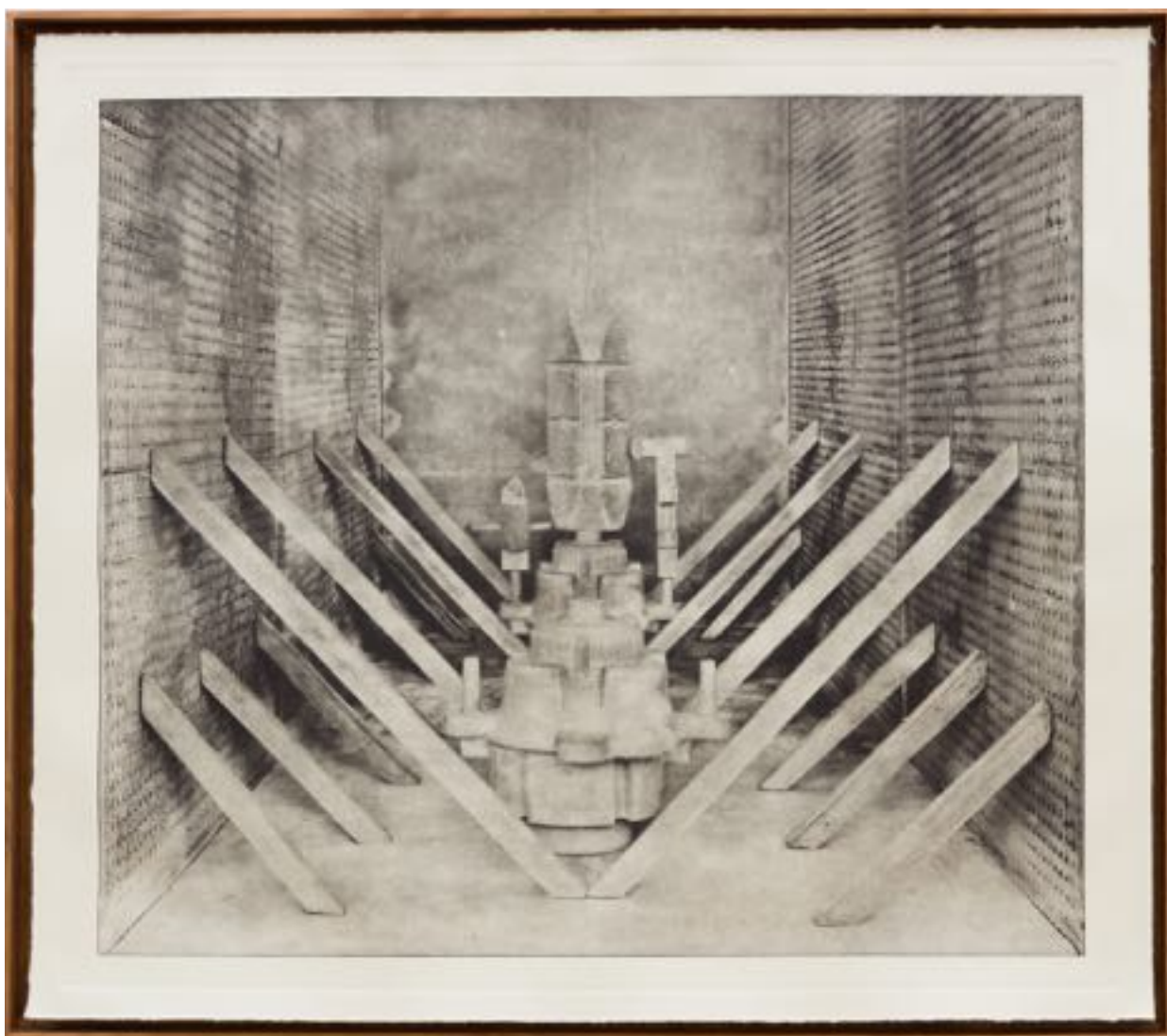
## Lynette Yiadom-Boakye at the Huntington

January 25, 2020–  
May 11, 2020

Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's work both eschews and begs for political context. Yet a recent exhibition curated by Hilton Als at the Huntington front-loads political nuance onto these works, even where there might not be any. In this context, Yiadom-Boakye's paintings, which feature black figures dancing or sitting for portraits, hang together in one gallery, while the surrounding rooms contain more standard fare of stiff, self-conscious paintings of 18th-century British aristocrats.

While her work's political charge is inherent and important to acknowledge, it is her skill as a painter—her unfussy yet purposeful brushwork, for instance—that gives the subjects of her paintings a sense of vulnerability and depth. This intimacy is particularly present in portraits that contain direct eye contact, such as *Greenhouse Fantasies* (2014) and *The Needs Beyond* (2013). Part of the allure of these works is simply optical, as the stark, unmixed white paint used for the character's eyes pops intensely from the painting's surface. Another is psychological—eye contact is a sign of potential interaction.

In choosing to use muted colors and hazy, non-specific backgrounds, Yiadom-Boakye obscures the time and placement of her character's lives, leaving them open to



Rodrigo Valenzuela, *Stature No. 5* (2020).  
Photogravure, 31 × 35.25 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and Klowden Mann.  
Photo: Michael Underwood.





Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, *Medicine at Playtime* (2017).  
Oil on linen, 79 x 48 inches. Museum of Contemporary Art,  
Los Angeles. Purchased with funds provided by the Acquisition  
and Collection Committee. © Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.  
Image courtesy of the artist, Jack Shainman Gallery,  
New York and Corvi-Mora, London.

interpretation. In *Harp-Strum* (2016), for instance, a 71 by 79-inch diptych, two girls perform a dance on a green screen-like background, too ecstatically engaged with their choreography and one another to notice a portrait of the aristocratic wife of a naval officer (eponymously titled *Frances [Balchen] West* by Joseph Highmore, 1742) hanging in a nearby room. As the vast majority of colonialist exploits and the slave trade were commenced via sea, the proximity of these images feels especially poignant. While there is a joyousness to the girls' focus inward, it does not extend to the viewer, who cannot help but see overt implications of our society's racism played out in these juxtaposing images. This pairing snaps into view the stark contrast between the peaceful subjects of Yiadom-Boakye's exhibition and the rest of the Huntington's collection, implying a more sinister undertone.

### Review Contributors

Keith J. Varadi is a Los Angeles-based artist, writer, researcher, and curator. He has exhibited internationally and published widely. Recent projects include *Death Becomes Him*, a solo exhibition at Galerie Tobias Naehring in Leipzig, Germany, and *Liver, Loner*, a group exhibition he organized at David Shelton Gallery in Houston, Texas.

Julie Weitz is an LA-based artist working in video, performance, and installation. She has been featured in *Artforum*, *Art in America*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, *Bomb Magazine*, *L.A. Confidential*, *Photograph Magazine*, *Hyperallergic* and on KCRW. In her ongoing performance work, Weitz embodies a futuristic folkloric humanoid named My Golem.

Michael Wright is a Los Angeles-based writer with an interdisciplinary MA in art and religious studies. He is the head of communications for Bridge Projects.

Molly Larkey is an artist and writer based in Los Angeles.

Matt Stromberg is a freelance arts writer based in Los Angeles. In addition to *Carla*, he has contributed to the *Los Angeles Times*, *KCET Artbound*, *The Guardian*, *The Art Newspaper*, *Hyperallergic*, *Terremoto*, *Artsy*, *Frieze*, and *Daily Serving*.

Jennifer Remenchik is an artist and writer in Los Angeles.

# Gallery Viewing Room

In lieu of traditional advertisements, the rest of this issue is dedicated to a gallery viewing room. Shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic began to take hold, we recognized the need for visibility for the exhibitions and artists affected by the pandemic in our community.

These pages are a small step toward the type of engagement with art that we are all used to, but by no means a permanent salve to the widespread effects that the pandemic has had on our local art community. There is much work to be done to create new structures that help to support and sustain our community, and we stand by ready to adapt, collaborate, and create new opportunities in response to the rapidly changing landscape.

Thank you to all of the galleries who made the production of this issue possible by participating in this viewing room.



## **Participating Galleries**

Angels Gate Cultural Center  
Big Pictures Los Angeles  
Blum & Poe  
Bridge Projects  
Charlie James Gallery  
Feuilleton  
Five Car Garage  
Klowden Mann  
Moskowitz Bayse  
Nicodim Gallery  
Parrasch Heijnen  
Philip Martin Gallery  
Regen Projects  
Telluride Gallery of Fine Art  
The Pit  
Wilding Cran Gallery



**The Pit**  
Heather Rasmussen

Heather Rasmussen, *Untitled*  
(*Broken glass, daikon and pointed foot*) (2020).  
Pigment print, 30 x 40 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and The Pit.



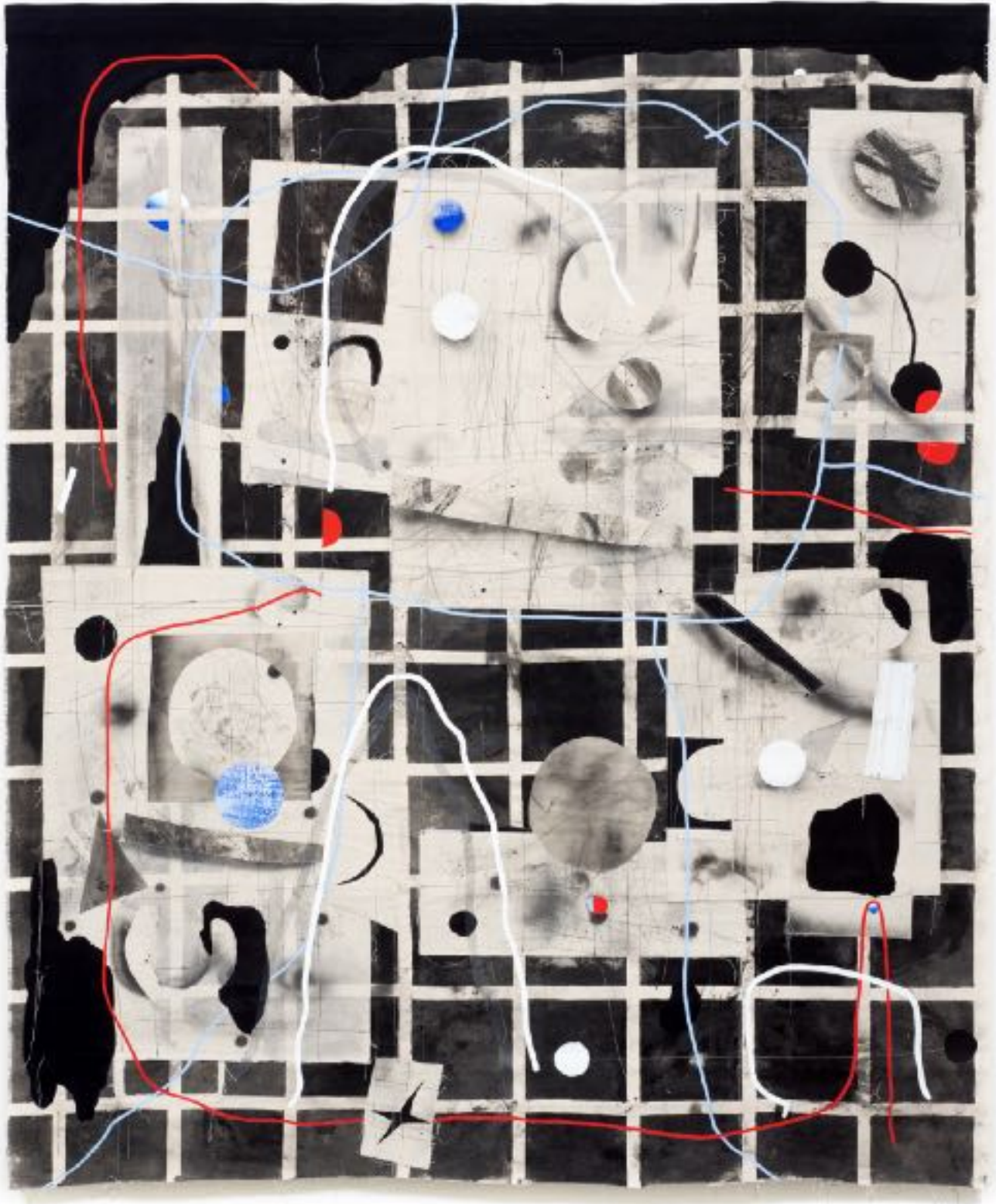
**Wilding Cran Gallery**  
**Seam & Transfer**  
 Fran Siegel and Paul Scott

Top: (left) Fran Siegel, *The Collection* (2018/19). (right) Paul Scott, *Scott's Cumbrian Blue(s) The Horizon Series, Wind Turbine No: 10* (2014). Image courtesy of the artist and Wilding Cran Gallery.

Bottom left: (from left) Paul Scott, *Cumbrian Blue(s), Willow, Garden, Stork, Tiber, Wild Italians, Youren & Turner*, (2014-2019/20). Image courtesy of the artist and Wilding Cran Gallery.

Bottom right: Fran Siegel, *Aperture* (detail) (2018/19). Image courtesy of the artist and Wilding Cran Gallery.





**Moskowitz Bayse**  
Christopher Iseri

Christopher Iseri, *Multiverse II* (2020).  
Flashe, acrylic, graphite, thread,  
and canvas on canvas, 85 x 72 x 2 inches.  
Image courtesy the artist and Moskowitz Bayse.





**Moskowitz Bayse**  
Christopher Iseri

Top: Christopher Iseri, *Take Me To Mars* (installation view) (2020). Image courtesy the artist and Moskowitz Bayse.

Bottom left: Christopher Iseri, *Slingshot* (2019). Flashe, acrylic, graphite, thread, and canvas on canvas, 16 × 12 × 1 inches. Image courtesy the artist and Moskowitz Bayse.

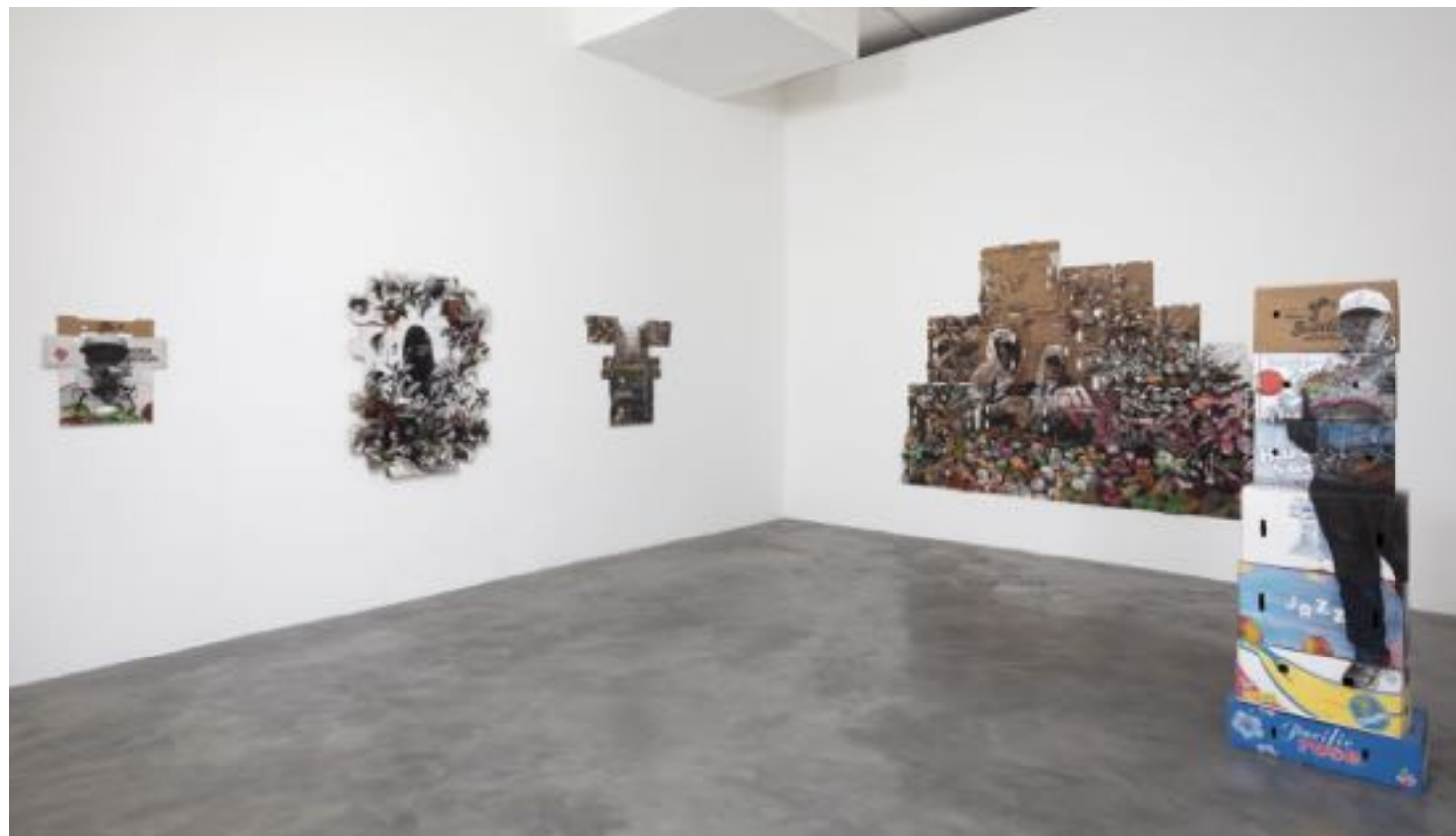
Bottom right: Christopher Iseri, *Light Years Away* (2019). Flashe, graphite, acrylic, thread, and canvas on canvas, 16 × 12 × 1 inches. Image courtesy the artist and Moskowitz Bayse.



**Philip Martin Gallery**  
Edgar Bryan

Edgar Bryan, *Klezmer Fantasy in E Major* (2020).  
Charcoal, acrylic, and oil on canvas, 76 × 64 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and  
Philip Martin Gallery. Photo: Jeff McLane.





**Charlie James Gallery**  
Narsiso Martinez

Top: Narsiso Martinez,  
*Superfresh* (installation view) (2020).  
Photo: Joshua Schaedel.



Bottom left: Narsiso Martinez,  
*Good Farms* (2020). Ink, gouache,  
charcoal, and matte gel on found  
produce box, 20.75 x 19.75 inches.  
Photo: Michael Underwood.

Bottom right: Narsiso Martinez,  
*Super Fresh* (detail) (2020). Ink,  
gouache, charcoal, and collage on  
found produce boxes, 84 x 133 inches.  
Photo: Joshua Schaedel.



**Blum & Poe  
Broadcasts**

Top: Broadcasts:  
Three Day Weekend Presents  
"The Gallery is Closed"

Bottom left: Broadcasts: Mimi Lauter  
Video series, episode 1

Bottom right: Broadcasts:  
Alexander Tovborg  
"How to Make an Icon"





**Bridge Projects**  
***To Bough and To Bend***

Amir Zaki, *Identical Twins* (2020).  
Archival pigment photograph, 75 × 60 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist  
and Edward Cella Art + Architecture.



**Regen Projects**  
James Welling

Top: *Julia Mamaea* (2018).  
Gelatin dichromate print with aniline  
dye, 14 × 11 inches. All images: © James  
Welling, courtesy of Regen Projects,  
Los Angeles.

Bottom left: *Terra Cotta Pomegranate*  
(2020). Oil pigment, electrostatic  
print on polyester, (Winsor & Newton  
Artists' Oil Color, HP Color  
LaserJet CP5225 on Pronto Plate),  
11.5 × 17.25 inches.

Bottom right: *Erechtheion. Western  
facade. Sacred olive, karyatids and old  
temple of Athena Polias in foreground*  
(2019). UV-curable ink on Dibond  
aluminum, 33.5 × 50.5 inches.



**Feuilleton**  
Tyler Vlahovich

Tyler Vlahovich, *Three Moving Parts*  
(installation view) (2020).  
Image courtesy of the artist and  
Feuilleton, Los Angeles.





**Telluride Gallery of Fine Art**  
Tony Berlant

Tony Berlant, *Home Run* (2018). Photo printed metal,  
found tin and steel brads, 10.5 x 10.5 x 8 inches.  
Part of Berlant's ongoing vintage collaged tin series which  
he began in 1970. Image courtesy of the artist  
and Telluride Gallery of Fine Art.



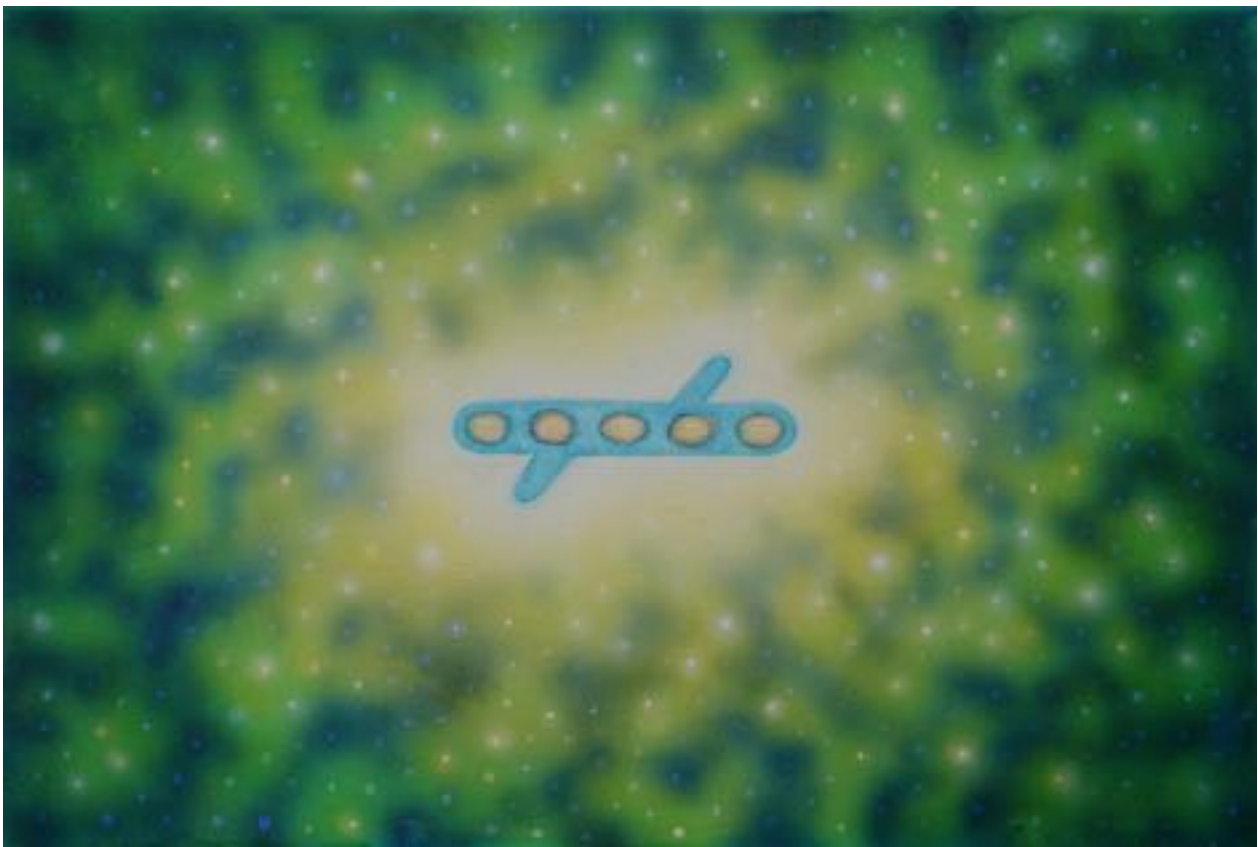


**Nicodim Gallery**  
Dominique Fung

Top left: Dominique Fung, *Increased Exposure* (2020). Image courtesy of the artist and Nicodim Gallery Los Angeles/Bucharest.

Top right: Dominique Fung, *A Bridge to the Ancestral Plane* (2020). Image courtesy of the artist and Nicodim Gallery Los Angeles/Bucharest.

Bottom: Dominique Fung, *Through the Looking Glass* (2020). Image courtesy of the artist and Nicodim Gallery Los Angeles/Bucharest.



**Five Car Garage**  
Charles Irvin, L,  
and Max Maslansky

Top: Charles Irvin, *Untitled* (2020).  
Acrylic on canvas, 20 × 30 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and  
Five Car Garage. *The Mysterious World*  
of Charles Irvin opens May 23.

Bottom left: L, *Spell for fae*  
*portal access* (2020).  
Glass, oil, mixed materials,  
12.25 × 12.25 × 24.50 inches.

Bottom right: Max Maslansky,  
*Angry Octopus* (2020). Acrylic on denim,  
38 × 39 inches.





**Klowden Mann**  
Rodrigo Valenzuela

Top: Rodrigo Valenzuela, *Journeyman*  
(installation view) (2020). Image courtesy  
of the artist and Klowden Mann.  
Photo: Michael Underwood.

Bottom: Rodrigo Valenzuela, *Stature No. 8* (2020).  
Photogravure, 31 x 35.25 inches.  
AP1 in edition of 8 plus 4APs.  
Photo: Michael Underwood.



**Big Pictures LA**  
**Alex Sewell, Matt Lifson,**  
**and Matthew Craven**

Top: Alex Sewell, *LA Games* (2019).  
 Oil on linen, 12 x 16 inches.  
 Image courtesy of the artist and Big  
 Pictures Los Angeles, \$2,500.

Bottom left: Matt Lifson, *Pursuits 1*  
 (2019). Oil on linen, 69 x 48 inches.  
 Image courtesy of the artist and Big  
 Pictures Los Angeles, \$6,200.

Bottom right: Matthew Craven,  
*BOUQUET* (2020). Ink on found poster  
 framed in walnut, 42 x 32 inches.  
 Image courtesy of the artist and Big  
 Pictures Los Angeles, \$4,500.



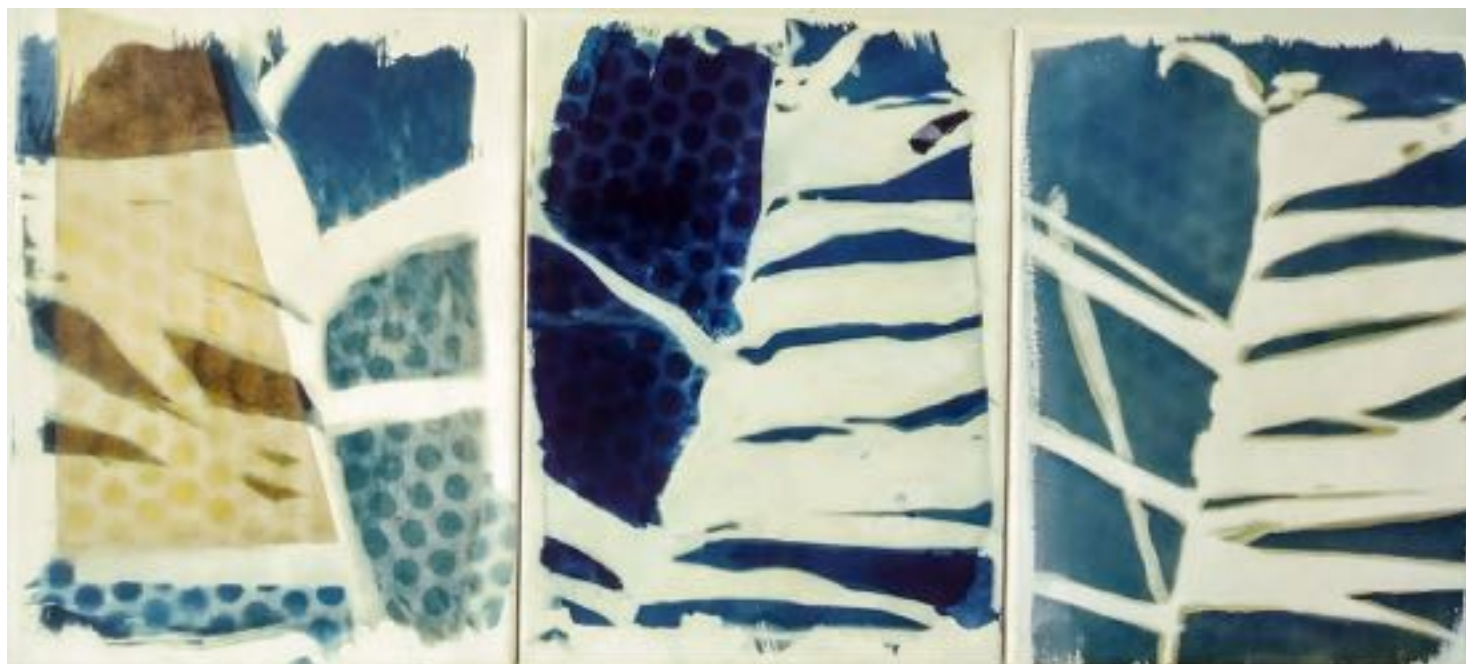


**Parrasch Heijnen**  
Edith Baumann, Joan Snyder,  
and Forrest Kirk

Top: Edith Baumann,  
*Pattern Recognition No. 33* (2019).  
Acrylic on canvas, 69 × 69 inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist  
and Parrasch Heijnen.

Bottom left: Joan Snyder, *Wild Prayer*  
(2001). Oil, acrylic, paper mache,  
herbs, and beads on linen on board,  
36 × 48 inches. Image courtesy  
of the artist and Parrasch Heijnen.

Bottom right: Forrest Kirk, *Dreaming  
of Revenge* (2020). Acrylic, bubble wrap,  
fabric, and Gorilla glue on canvas,  
48 × 48 inches. Image courtesy of the  
artist and Parrasch Heijnen.



**Angels Gate  
Cultural Center**  
Beth Elliott, Anna Erneholm,  
and Da Aie Park

Top: Beth Elliott, *Banana Leaf* (2020).  
Triptych cyanotype  
on watercolor paper mounted  
on canvas, 12 x 27 inches.

Bottom left: Anna Erneholm,  
*Forth* (2019). Plywood, 9 inches.  
Currently showcased at Art@Work  
Popup Gallery, Long Beach.

Bottom right: Da Aie Park,  
*Blue Plane 7-10* (2019).  
Acrylic on panel, 60 x 60 inches.  
Photo: In Kyoung Kim.





**Angels Gate  
Cultural Center**  
Candice Gawne,  
Edmond Maloney, and  
Elyse Pignolet

Top: Candice Gawne, *Dreamer* (2019).  
Encaustic on panel, 16 x 20 inches.  
Shown in *Women by Women*  
at SoLA Contemporary Gallery,  
Los Angeles 2020.

Bottom left: Edmond Maloney,  
*Suburban Food Group of the Mid  
Century* (2019). Acrylic on canvas,  
18 x 18 inches. Shown in *Local Notions*  
at Angels Gate Cultural Center,  
San Pedro (2019).

Bottom right: Elyse Pignolet, *You Should  
Calm Down* (installation view of various  
ceramic works and wallpaper design)  
(2019). Photo: Sean Meredith.  
Shown in *You Should Calm Down* at  
Track 16 Gallery, Los Angeles (2019).



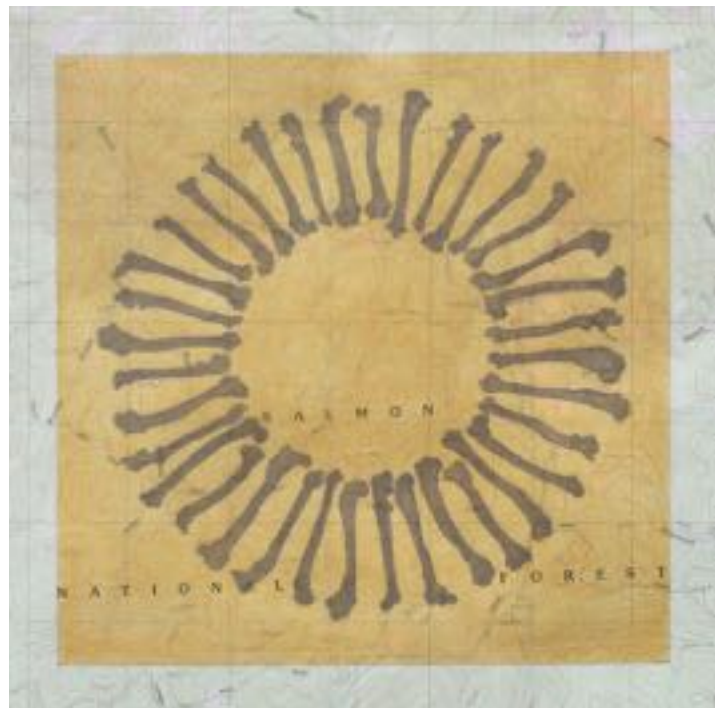


**Angels Gate  
Cultural Center**  
Jesse Small, Ann Weber,  
and June Edmonds

Top: Jesse Small, *Ghost Truck One*  
(2019). Steel skin and chassis  
of a 1948 Willys truck, 6.5 × 6 × 18 feet.

Bottom left: Ann Weber, *Boogie Woogie  
B+W* (2019). Cardboard, staples, and  
polyurethane, 55 × 40 × 4 inches. Image  
courtesy of Dolby Chadwick Gallery,  
San Francisco. Photo: Ray Carofano.

Bottom right: June Edmonds,  
*Shadd Cary Flag* (2020). Acrylic on linen,  
74 × 50 inches. Photo: Kate Lain.



**Angels Gate  
Cultural Center**  
Lucinda Rudolph,  
Vanessa Madrid, and  
Stuart Hamilton

Top: Lucinda Rudolph, *The View* (2017).  
Oil on canvas, 16 × 20 inches.

Bottom left: Vanessa Madrid,  
*Trouble* (2018). Acrylic on canvas,  
36 × 36 inches.

Bottom right: Stuart Hamilton,  
*Bone Lands 1* (2020).  
Graphite and organic pigment on  
topographic map, 12 × 12 inches.





**Angels Gate  
Cultural Center**  
Nancy Voegeli-Curran,  
Phoebe Barnum,  
and Lowell Nickel

Top: Nancy Voegeli-Curran, *Unruly Findings 3* (2018). Wire, pellon, tape, spray paint, and acrylic paint, 35 x 84 x 12 inches. Photo: Gene Ogami.

Bottom left: Phoebe Barnum, *Vortex* (2018). Ceramic, 7 x 12.25 inches.

Bottom right: Lowell Nickel, *Load off Annie* (2019). Photomontage, 24 x 24 inches.



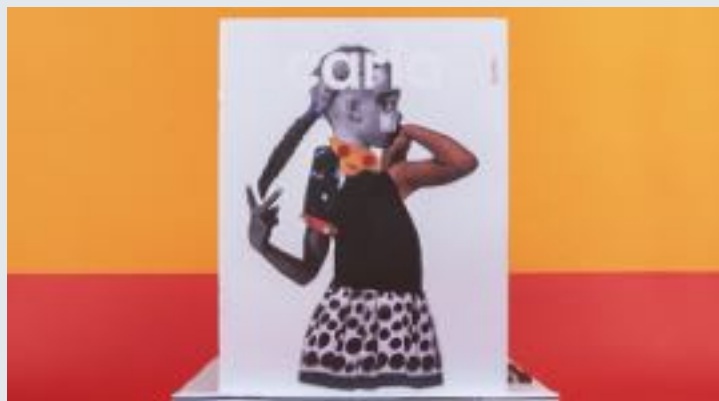


**Angels Gate  
Cultural Center**  
Tim Maxeiner, Leah Shane Dixon,  
and Lynn Doran

Top: Tim Maxeiner, *Off the Cliff  
Recording* (2019). Mixed media, found  
materials and electrical components.  
Pictured in *Off the Cliff, Contraptions  
and Publications* by Tim Maxeiner at  
Flux Art Space, Long Beach (2019).

Bottom left: Leah Shane Dixon,  
*From the Realms Beyond the Sun* (2019).  
Acrylic on canvas, 11 x 14 inches.

Bottom right: Lynn Doran,  
*Dimi Celebration - The rebirth of  
a father - Dassenech Tribe - The Delta,  
Omo Valley, Ethiopia* (2019).



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Episode 17

# Remembering John Baldessari

Featuring interviews with Meg Cranston, Fay Ray, Norm Laich,  
Leslie Jones, and Amanda McGough

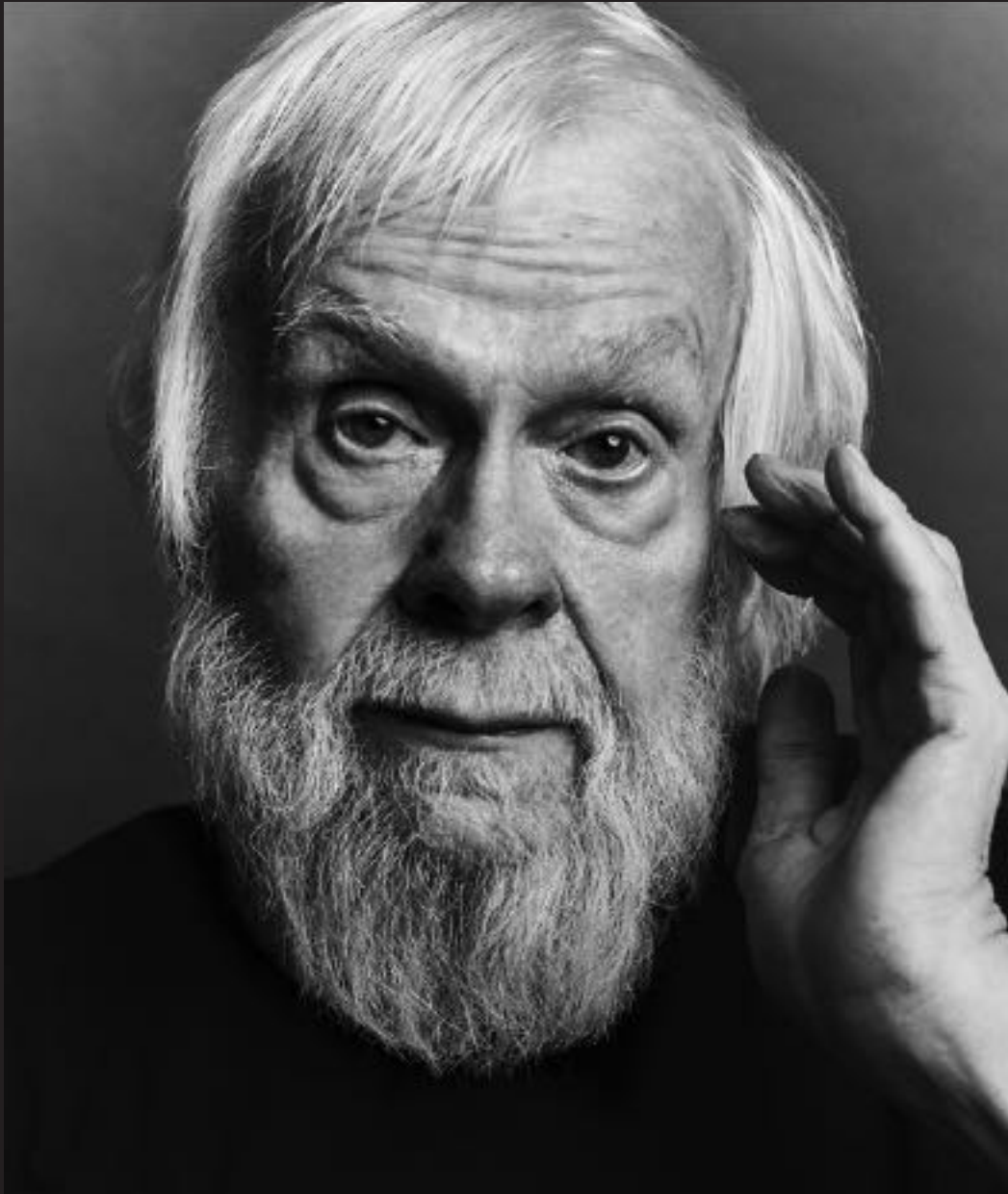


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