

# ARTFORUM

DECEMBER 2013

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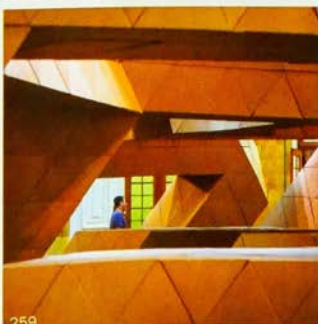
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other web-exclusive content related to this issue.

Cover: See page 286 for captions.

This page, from top: Gabriela Cowperthwaite, *Blackfish*,  
2013, digital video, color, sound, 82 minutes. Bill Brandt,  
*Losing at the Horse Races, Auteuil, Paris* (detail), ca. 1932,  
gélatin silver print, 8 1/4 x 7". From "Bill Brandt: Shadow  
and Light," Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2013.  
View of "Rosemarie Trockel: A Cosmos," 2012-13, New  
Museum, New York. From left: *Made in China*, 2008;  
*Magma*, 2008. Photo: Benoit Pailley. Tony Smith, *Bat Cave*  
(detail), 1969-71/2013, cardboard. Installation view,  
Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil.  
From the 9th Mercosul Biennial. Photo: Tárilis Schneider.

# LYNNE COOKE

Lynne Cooke is Andrew W. Mellon Professor at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Recently, she curated the traveling exhibition "Rosemarie Trockel: A Cosmos" and, for the Fundação Casa França-Brasil in Rio de Janeiro, "Cristina Iglesias: A Place of Reflection." She is currently working on an exhibition about abstract painting, late modernism, and textiles.



1. Robert Irwin, *Scrim Veil-Black Rectangle-Natural Light*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1977, cloth, metal, wood. Installation view, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2013. Photo: Philipp Scholz Rittermann.

4. Anonymous, untitled, 2007, vinyl paint on MDF, 39 1/2 x 55 1/2". From Juan Manuel Echavarría's *La guerra que no hemos visto: un proyecto de memoria histórica* (The War We Have Not Seen: A Historical Memory Project), 2007-2009.



1

**ROBERT IRWIN** (WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, NEW YORK; CURATED BY DONNA DE SALVO) With little more than a taut plane of polyester, Irwin's site-specific *Scrim Veil-Black Rectangle-Natural Light* vividly animated the Whitney's fourth floor while highlighting the signature window that pictures the cityscape beyond. Hard to imagine how that peerless space could be better engaged. Hard to imagine why more than thirty-five years were permitted to elapse between the work's debut in 1977 and its next appearance—just under the wire, so to speak, before the museum quits Marcel Breuer's masterpiece for larger quarters downtown.

2

**"ICE AGE ART: ARRIVAL OF THE MODERN MIND"** (BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON; CURATED BY JILL COOK) Arguing that the

modern mind was formed when humans began to create art, this moving show assembled highly realistic carvings of animals alongside abstracted human figures. Though much about the Paleolithic era remains mysterious, including the reasons for such stylistic disparities, its burst of creativity remains extraordinary.

3

**"SHARON LOCKHART | NOA ESHKOL"** (JEWISH MUSEUM, NEW YORK; CURATED BY TALIA AMAR, STEPHANIE BARRON, AND BRITT SALVESEN) Though billed as a two-woman show, this haunting exhibition (organized in its New York iteration by Aviva Weintraub) was really Lockhart's ode to the Israeli choreographer and textile artist Noa Eshkol (1924-2007). In a five-screen film installation and series of photographs informed by her hallmark

aesthetic—sensuous yet rigorously spare—Lockhart paid tribute to a maverick multidisciplinary artist whose work deserves to be better known.

Organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

4

**JUAN MANUEL ECHAVARRÍA** (CASA DAROS, RIO DE JANEIRO) Over a two-year period, Medellín-based artist Echavarría organized painting workshops for some eighty adults that resulted in 420 paintings. Given their various modes of naive figuration, the scenes of murder and mayhem conjured in these mostly modestly scaled works are jarring. That they were made not by the victims of atrocities but by the perpetrators—specifically, by demobilized military and guerrilla combatants from the rank and file in Colombia's ongoing civil war—further



3. Left: Sharon Lockhart, *Five Dances and Nine Wall Carpets by Noa Eshkol*, 2011, five-channel video installation, color, sound, continuous loop. Production still.

2. Below: Bison carving from Zaraysk, Russia, ca. 18,000 BC, mammoth ivory, approx. 4 1/2 x 1 1/2 x 6 1/2". From "Ice Age Art: Arrival of the Modern Mind."





confounds. Yet when presented in the context of an exhibition that included his own artworks, Echavarría's project *La guerra que no hemos visto: un proyecto de memoria histórica* (The War We Have Not Seen: A Historical Memory Project), 2007–2009, goes beyond considerations of possible expiation or catharsis; it calls into question viewers' assumptions about the connotations of visual languages whose guileless styles are normally associated with the pleasures of spontaneous, unschooled forms of creativity.

5

**"BLUES FOR SMOKE" (THE GEFFEN CONTEMPORARY AT MOCA; CURATED BY BENNETT SIMPSON)** Simpson's absorbing show felt less like an idea that matured on the page than like something forged in the making—a quality that, at least among recent themed exhibitions, is all too rare.

6

**NANCY SHAVER (HENRY, HUDSON, NEW YORK, AND JOHN DAVIS GALLERY, HUDSON, NEW YORK)** Henry, Shaver's storied store, is arguably less a boutique than an ongoing installation combining found artifacts and assisted readymades—though these

distinctions often prove illegible. This past fall, Henry effectively became one venue in a two-part show. In the complementary exhibition at John Davis Gallery, Shaver subtly introduced into the realm of the fine arts questions relating to the signifiers of class and social distinction usually deemed relevant only to the popular and vernacular arts.

7

**"ROVING SIGNS" (MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY, NEW YORK; CURATED BY TERRY WINTERS)** Winters's inspired ensemble of sculpture, quilts, musical scores, paintings, and collages took its cue from a collection of folk-derived string figures put together by the artist and ethnomusicologist Harry Smith. Shared rhythms, geometries, patterns, and associations threaded miscellaneous artifacts into syncretic relationships more sensed and felt than explicated.

8

**"COMPASS FOR SURVEYORS: 19TH CENTURY AMERICAN LANDSCAPES" (LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART, CURATED BY AUSTEN BAILLY AND JOSÉ LUIS BLONDET)** Playful yet informative, this

archival presentation of landscape-based works from LACMA's collection bears the distinctive imprint of Blondet's slyly subversive thinking. As if to chart the literal as well as figurative destabilizing of familiar art-historical narratives and conventions of display, an antique surveyor's compass was set on a table placed dead center in the gallery. On one wall, a small group of oil paintings, limning the West's frontier myths and uncharted terrain, were hung so that their horizons aligned. The facing wall was crowded with an extensive array of pictures depicting the long-settled East Coast, replete with inherited sureties. On a third wall, the newer medium of photography, favored by many westward travelers, reoriented these cardinal values. Fittingly for this institution located on the continent's western edge, photographs not only make up the bulk of its historic landscape collection but provide many of its highlights.

9

**HILMA AF KLINT (MODERNA MUSEET, STOCKHOLM; CURATED BY IRIS MÜLLER-WESTERMANN)** Arguing that the world was not yet ready for her visionary revelations, af Klint (1862–1944) decreed that her work, which she refrained from exhibiting

during her lifetime, should be sequestered after her death for twenty more years. Astonishingly diverse, the paintings in this retrospective defy their historical boundaries and occultist origins and suggest that af Klint's art was even farther ahead of its time than she reckoned.

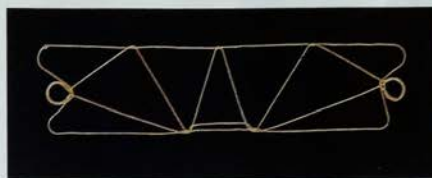
10

**"AUDUBON'S AVIARY: PART 1 OF THE COMPLETE FLOCK" (NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY; CURATED BY ROBERTA J. M. OLSON)** Very little in the early history of American visual art can hold its own beside Audubon's magisterial achievement, as this marvelous exhibition—showcasing prints and life-size watercolor renderings of North American birds—made clear. The inclusion of a recently discovered cache of Audubon's early studies, which enabled viewers to chart the evolution of his style and compositional methods, suggests that further revelations may be forthcoming; Watch out for the next installation in this three-part project, slated for 2014. □



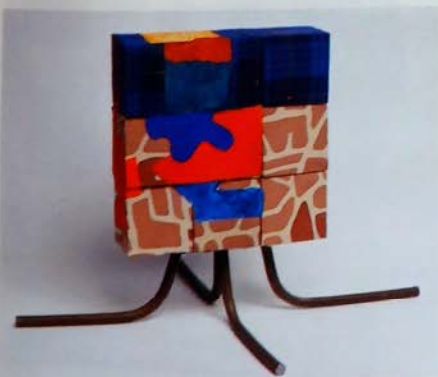
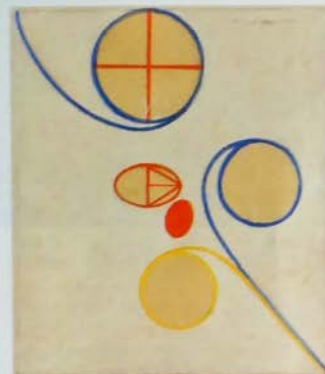
5. Above: View of "Blues for Smoke," 2012–13, the Geffen Contemporary at MoCA. Foreground: Zoé Leonard, 1961, 2002–. Background, from left: Beauford Delaney, *Portrait of Charlie Parker*, 1968; Beauford Delaney, *Portrait of Jean Genet*, 1972; Beauford Delaney, *James Baldwin*, ca. 1955; Beauford Delaney, *Portrait of a Young Musician*, n.d.

6. Below: Nancy Shaver, *Block, 4 Square*, 2013, found metal, wooden blocks, fabric, Flashe paint, house paint, oil pastel, 15 x 23 x 18".



7. Above: Harry Smith, untitled string figure, ca. 1970, string collage on board, 7 1/2 x 20". From "Roving Signs."

9. Right: Hilma af Klint, *Sjustjärnan (The Seven Pointed Stars), No. 2, Group V*, 1908, tempera, gouache, and graphite on paper mounted on canvas, 29 1/2 x 24 1/2". From the series "WUS/Sjustjärnan," 1908.



8. Above: View of "Compass for Surveyors: 19th Century American Landscapes," 2012–13, Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

10. Right: John James Audubon, *Black-Billed Cuckoo (Coccyzus erythrophthalmus), Study for Havell*, 1822, watercolor, graphite, pastel, gouache, ink, and glaze on paper, 19 1/2 x 24 1/2".

