



NEVINE MAHMOUD

Press Pack



## NEVINE MAHMOUD

**BORN** 1988, London, United Kingdom  
Lives and works in Los Angeles

### EDUCATION

2014 MFA | University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA  
2011 BA | Goldsmiths University, London, UK  
2010 Foundation Studies | Byam Shaw School of Fine Art, London, UK

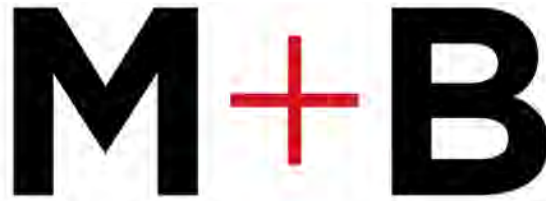
### SOLO AND GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2017 Solo exhibition, M+B, Los Angeles, CA (forthcoming)  
Balice Hertling, Paris, France (forthcoming)

2016 *Régine des Fleurs: Lilies of Forgiveness*, c.nichols project, Los Angeles, CA  
*An Uncanny Order*, Jessica Silverman, San Francisco, CA  
*Sim City*, Ballroom Marfa, Marfa, TX  
*PLEASE HAVE ENOUGH ACID IN THE DISH!*, M+B, Los Angeles, CA  
*The Poet and The Critic, and the missing*, curated by Lauren Mackler, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA  
*Four Square in the Land of Milk and Honey*, BBQLA, Los Angeles, CA  
*Brancusi 2.0*, Arturo Bandini, Los Angeles, CA  
*Roman à Clef And/Or The Appetite Of The Chef*, Rainbow in Spanish, Los Angeles, CA  
*Three Isolated Effects*, Lock Up International, Los Angeles, CA  
*The Lasting Concept*, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, OR

2015 *Motorfruit*, Blood Gallery, New York, NY  
*Tickles*, 356 Mission, Los Angeles, CA  
*Deep Dark Submersion*, Romer Young Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*New Babylon*, Roberts & Tilton, Los Angeles, CA  
*Debris*, James Fuentes, New York, NY  
*SOGTFO*, Francois Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*Nihilism*, Arturo Bandini, Los Angeles, CA  
*Vitrine*, JOAN, Los Angeles, CA

2014 *Seven Reeds*, Overduin & Co., Los Angeles, CA  
*CK One Daily*, Night Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*2x2x2*, Favorite Goods, Los Angeles, CA  
*Louie Louie*, Human Resources, Los Angeles, CA



*A U T O B O D Y*, MFA thesis show, Gayle & Ed Roski MFA Gallery, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

2013 *CULM*, Night Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
*Magnitude*, RealGold Exhibitions, London, UK

2012 *Dust Storm*, Occasionals Gallery, London, UK  
*Granica/Border*, Miroslaw Balka School of Fine Art, Poznan, Poland

2011 *Cargo Cult*, Null/Void Gallery, London, UK

#### **AWARDS AND RESIDENCIES**

2016 Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant Winner

2011 Residency, Miroslaw Balka School of Fine Art, Poznan, Poland

2009 Summer Residency, Firenzi School of Art, Florence, Italy

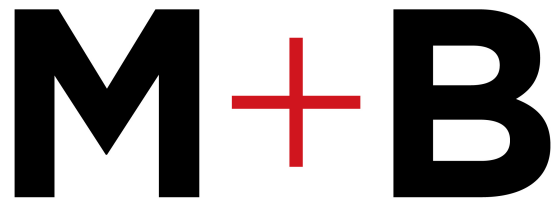
2008 Catherine Brewer Craft Award, London, UK

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

2016 Mizota, Sharon. "Review: *PLEASE HAVE ENOUGH ACID IN THE DISH!*, Los Angeles Times, August 17  
"Portfolio by Nevine Mahmoud: Basketballs, Beachballs, Slides." BOMB  
Berardini, Andrew. "Playtime." MOUSSE Magazine, Issue 52, February 2016  
Noice, E.D. "Considering Nevine Mahmoud's Three Isolated Effects." aqnb, May 11

2015 "SOGTFO at François Ghebaly," Contemporary Art Daily, April 7  
Berardini, Arturo. "SOGTFO (Sculpture or Get the Fuck Out)." ArtReview, May

2014 Knight, Christopher. "Seven Reeds, exploring the work in works of art." Los Angeles Times, December 4, 2014



## NEVINE MAHMOUD

**Nevine Mahmoud** (b. 1988, London) received her BA from Goldsmiths, University of London and MFA from the University of Southern California. She has participated in numerous exhibitions, including most recently *The Poet, the Critic and the Missing*, as part of the *Storefront Series* exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and *The Lasting Concept* at the Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. Other recent thematic exhibitions include *An Uncanny Order* at Jessica Silverman, San Francisco; *Debris* at James Fuentes, New York, NY; *CK One Daily* at Night Gallery, Los Angeles; *SOGTFO* at *Francois Ghebaly*, Los Angeles; and *Seven Reeds* at Overduin & Co., Los Angeles. Her work is currently on view in *This is Presence* at Ballroom Marfa, TX. Recent press includes *MOUSSE*, *Art Review*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Contemporary Art Daily*. The artist will have her debut solo exhibition at M+B in Fall 2017. Nevine Mahmoud lives and works in Los Angeles.



NEVINE MAHMOUD

Selected Portfolio

**M+B**



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Angle of Repose I*, 2016  
alabaster  
10 x 7-1/2 x 7-1/2 inches (25.4 x 19 x 19 cm)  
(NM2.16.009.07)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

Installation View of *An Uncanny Order*, three-person show at Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco  
November 4 – December 21, 2016

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Slide (Cast Back)*, 2014  
cement, fiberglass, pigment and paint  
50 x 22-1/2 x 15 inches (127 x 57.2 x 38.1 cm)  
(NM2.14.001.50)



# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

*Tutti Laying*, 2016

alabaster, laminate cube

sculpture: 8 x 5 inches (20.3 x 12.7 cm)

pedestal: 28 x 28 x 28 inches (71.1 x 71.1 cm)

(NM2.008.08)

**M+B**



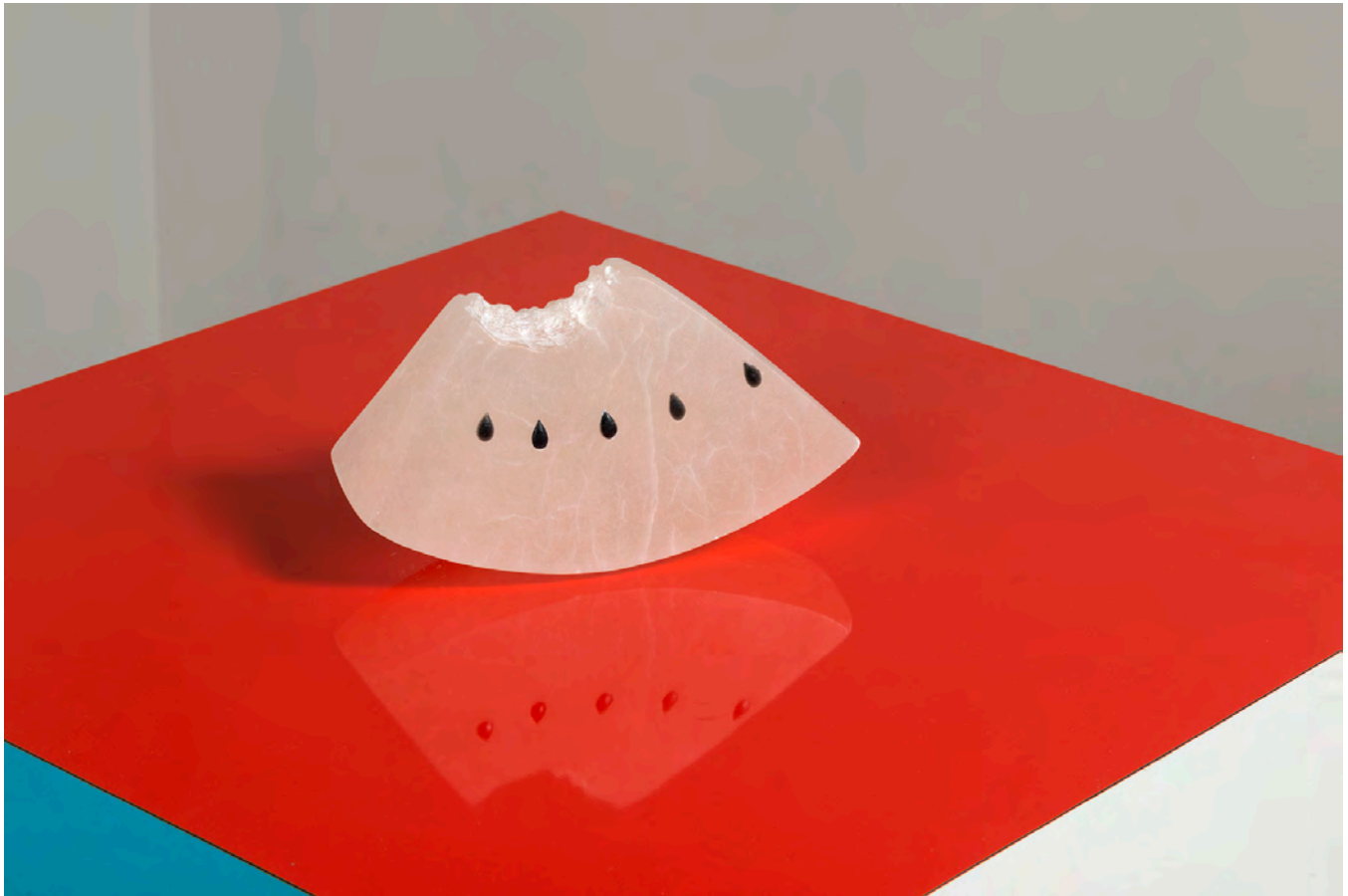
**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Tutti Laying*, 2016 (detail)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
Installation View of *Sim City*, group show Ballroom Marfa, Texas  
September 23 – December, 2016

# M+B



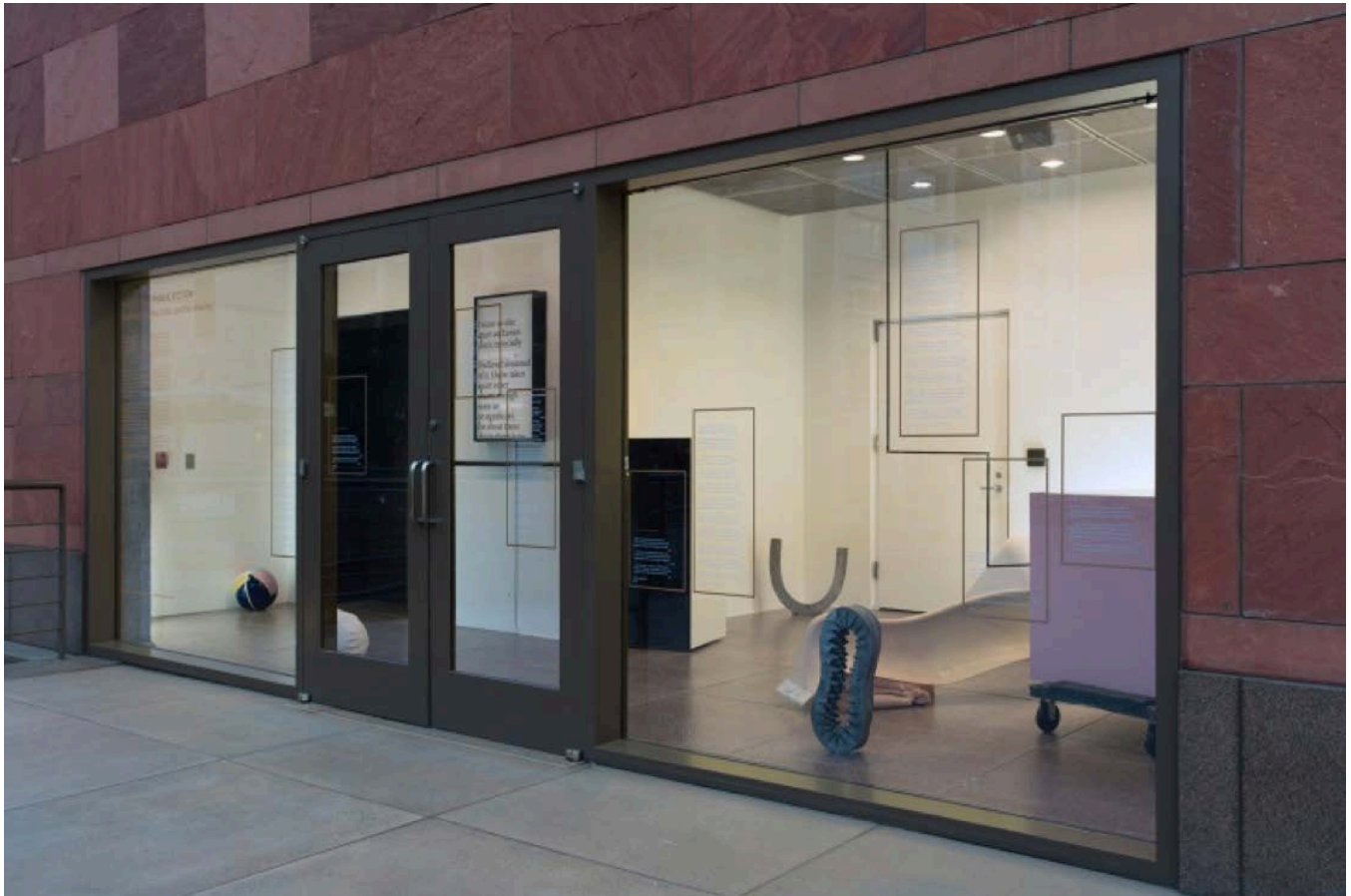
**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Watermelon (1)*, 2015  
alabaster, resin and pigment  
6 x 2 x 7 inches (15.2 x 5 x 17.8 cm)  
(NM2.15.001.06)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Peach Object*, 2016  
carved calcite, carved steel  
sculpture: 11 x 11 x 11 inches (27.9 x 27.9 x 27.9 cm)  
(NM2.001.15)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

Installation View of storefront: *Public Fiction: The Poet and The Critic, and the missing*,  
at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
March 19 – June 19, 2016

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Deflating Beach Ball II*, 2016  
ceramic and glaze  
13 x 13 x 13 inches (33 x 33 x 33 cm)  
(NM2.002.13)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
Installation View of *SOGTFO*, group show at Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles  
February 28 – April 11, 2015



# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

*Tunnel chunk with color plane*, 2015 (detail)

laminated, aluminum

10 x 10 x 8 inches (25.4 x 25.4 x 20.3 cm)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

*U*, 2015

4 x 24 x 32 inches (10.2 x 60.1 x 81.3 cm)  
laminated, mdf, cast aluminum

*Mouth*, 2016

4 x 9 x 24 inches (10.2 x 60.1 x 60.1 cm)  
laminated, mdf, cast aluminum

*Knotted*, 2015

4 x 18 x 12 inches (10.2 x 45.7 x 30.5 cm)  
laminated, mdf, cast aluminum

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

*Mouth*, 2016

cast aluminum

4 x 9 x 24 inches (10.2 x 22.9 x 60.1 cm)

(NM2.009.04)

**M+B**



**Nevine Mahmoud**

*Fig/vagina*, 2015

alabaster

12 x 7 x 8 inches (30.5 x 17.8 x 20.3 cm)

(NM2.15.005.12)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**

*Putte II*, 2016

alabaster, laminate rectangle

sculpture: 7 x 11 inches (17.8 x 27.9 cm)

pedestal: 46 x 18 x 18 inches (116.8 x 45.7 x 45.7 cm)

(NM2.16.008.11)

**M+B**



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*Putte II*, 2016 (detail)

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
Installation View of *Seven Reeds*, group show at Overduin & Co., Los Angeles  
November 9 – December 20, 2014

# M+B



**Nevine Mahmoud**  
*ball (broken/naked)*, 2016  
ceramic and glaze  
8 x 8 x 8 inches (20.3 x 20.3 x 20.3 cm)  
(NM2.003.08)





NEVINE MAHMOUD

Press and Press Releases

# M+B

ARTSY

20 Artists to Watch at The Armory Show

March 1, 2017



Portrait of Nevine Mahmoud in her Los Angeles studio by Emily Berl for Artsy.

Two years ago, Mahmoud carved an erotic peach from a slab of stone in what would ultimately spark a daring new body of work for the young sculptor. This week, in her debut at The Armory Show, the series culminates in a collection of handcarved forms that reference elements of the human body—including a lone tongue, a pair of lips, and a single breast.

“They’re disembodied body parts; parts without a whole,” says Mahmoud from her studio in a converted garage in eastern Los Angeles. Inspired by the fragmented bodies in works by Louise Bourgeois and Alina Szapocznikow, and the unsettling quality that can accompany even their most erotic or attractive forms, she laces beautiful shapes with strange, dark undertones. Though sensual, the sculptures are fashioned in hard stone and often affixed with metal and mechanical parts. “I’m always hoping to find a form that sits somewhere between familiar and bodily—something that you would recognize as your own, but something that’s also alienated,” she says.

The sculptures on view have been carved from alabaster, sun-yellow calcite, and opaque pink and white marble, using a traditional process that’s a departure from the plaster casting technique she employed for her MFA work at the University of Southern California. A particularly fruitful stone-gathering mission once led her to a stone-carving studio in Northern California, where she found a mentor in an older female sculptor. “That’s kind of how I’ve learned everything that I know,” she says of this new chapter of work, the next iteration of which will be on view in her fall solo with Los Angeles gallery M+B.

# JESSICA SILVERMAN GALLERY

For immediate release

## **An Uncanny Order**

**Sebastian Fierro, Matt Lipps, Nevine Mahmoud**

November 4 – December 21, 2016

Opening reception: November 4, 6–8pm

Jessica Silverman Galley is pleased to present “An Uncanny Order,” an exhibition featuring paintings by Sebastian Fierro, sculptures by Nevine Mahmoud and photographic constructions by Matt Lipps.

Rapid change often engenders a sense of estrangement. Sometimes it is experienced as a buzz of otherworldliness, other times as the presence of the surreal in the everyday. In “An Uncanny Order,” the work of Fierro, Lipps and Mahmoud embraces the creative potential of alienation, exploring its psychological, social, physical and environmental dimensions in distinct, intimate and colorful ways.

**Sebastian Fierro’s** paintings have strong compositions that satisfy the viewer as both geometric abstractions and *trompe l’oeil* representations. They depict imaginative spaces that are both domestic and interstellar, grounded and fantastic, nostalgic and science fiction. Presenting light as solid matter and deep space as flat surfaces, they are inspired by astronomy and the poetic thought that we have historically found our location on earth in relation to the stars. “Paradoxically, painting invites the spectator into its frame to examine the world beyond,” explains Fierro. “The Internet is the latest mechanism mobilizing the far to the near, making us believe that we are nomads, who can see every square foot of our planet through the simulacrum of Google maps.”

**Matt Lipps** uses collage strategies, sculptural tropes and theater staging techniques to create photographs that explore the history and politics of culture. In this series, he creates surprising juxtapositions through alternating diagonal strips of images appropriated from *U.S. Camera*, a magazine published between 1938 and 1969. In *Beguiling* (2016), Lipps combines a 1958 color close up of a woman’s face by Irving Penn with a black and white picture of a leafless tree by Andreas Feininger, taken the same year. Lipps then disrupts the tension between the two images with shelves that protrude from the surface upon which he places freestanding cut-outs that enrich the meaning of the work.

**Nevine Mahmoud’s** sculptures explore the body and architecture as psychologically charged forms. Mahmoud often begins with substantial, brightly colored pedestals, which insist on their presence in gallery, museum and domestic spaces. Upon them sit cast and hand carved sculptures, which are formally and fetishistically in dialogue with the surreal work of artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Robert Gober and Alina Szapocznikow. Oftentimes, Mahmoud’s work is informed by archival research. *Tutti Laying* (2016), an alabaster sculpture of a breast on a red, yellow, pink and white pedestal, is inspired by Anthony Vidler’s account of the ruins of Pompeii where a negative impression – a ghost – of a woman’s breast was found scorched into the earth. [1]

[1] Anthony Vidler. *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely* MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 1992.

# JESSICA SILVERMAN GALLERY

**Fierro** (b. 1988, Colombia) has a BFA in Painting from Los Andes University (Bogota) and an MFA from Hunter College (New York). His work has been recently exhibited in a solo exhibition at Instituto de Vision in Bogota. Other exhibitions include Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín, Colsubsidio Art Museum (Bogota), La Tertulia Museum (Cali) and Bank of the Republic Art Museum (Bogota) His work is in the permanent collections of the Contemporary Art Museum in Bogota, BBVA Collection, and Deutsche Bank Collection. Fierro lives and works in Colombia.

**Lipps** (b. 1975) has a BFA in Photography from California State University and an MFA from University of California Irvine. His work is in the permanent collections of LACMA, SFMOMA, MOCA Los Angeles, the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), the Saatchi Gallery and the Pilara Foundation Collection/Pier 24 in San Francisco. His work was included in SFMOMA's inaugural exhibition "California and the West." Lipps lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.

**Mahmoud** (b. 1988, London, UK) has a BFA from Goldsmiths (London) and an MFA from University of Southern California (Los Angeles). She was recently included in the "Storefront Series" exhibition, "The Poet, the Critic and the Missing" at MOCA Los Angeles, and "The Lasting Concept" at the Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. Her work is currently on view in "This is Presence" at Ballroom Marfa in Marfa, TX. Mahmoud lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.

# M + B



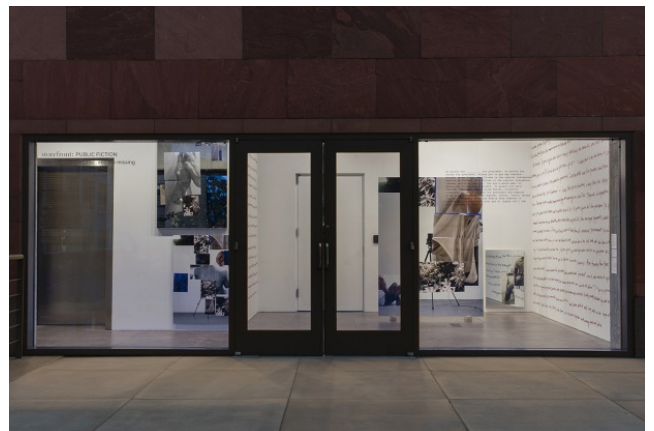
LOS ANGELES REVIEW OF BOOKS

## A Note on the Contemporary Canon: Public Fiction's Show at MOCA Los Angeles

By Paloma Checa-Gismero  
June 17, 2016

HIP-HEIGHT ON THE RIGHT inside edge of the window frame, perpendicular to me are three captions on a concrete wall. Two point to works inside the gallery, and one to an address far up in the Hollywood Hills. I am outside Los Angeles's Museum of Contemporary Art, standing across the glass from storefront: *The Poet and the Critic*, and the missing, the most recent exhibition by the independent art platform Public Fiction.

Storefront: *The Poet and the Critic*, and the missing is a two-show project occupying the anteroom of The Marcia Simon Weisman Works on Paper Study Center, on the plaza level of MOCA on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles. Curated by Public Fiction's leading soul, Lauren Mackler, it has brought to the space works by artists Nathaniel Mackey, Nevine Mahmoud, and Lynne Tillman (between March 19 and April 25, 2016), and Nancy Lupo, Litia Perta, and Paul Mpagi Sepuya (between May 2 and June 19, 2016).



Complementing the shows was the missing, a screening on May 5 that included Isaac Julien's *The Attendant* (1993), Alfred Leslie and Frank O'Hara's *The Last Clean Shirt* (1964), Maha Maamoun's *Domestic Tourism II* (2009), and an installation of Mungo Thomson's 2002 video *The American Desert* (for Chuck Jones). Lastly, the cycle will close with Stanya Kahn-directed performance *A Fugitive Thought* on June 2.

Watered iced coffee in my left hand. It is a Tuesday and the museum is closed. I stand outside the storefront in the empty plaza that is also a roof for an underground contemporary art mausoleum. Below my feet, silent, is Helen Molesworth's show *The Art of Our Time*. MOCA is closed for the day, but the storefront is a storefront. Across its full wall, glass captions are still white with text printed on black non-serif type. Name of the artist, date, and place of birth. Name of piece, date, a short narrative, information on materials and technique. The first caption from the top reads "Paul Mpagi Sepuya." The San Bernardino-born, Los Angeles-based artist brings three pieces to the show: *Study with Five Figures* (3009) (2016), *Figures/Ground Studies* (2016), and *Study with Four Figures* (3001) (2016), three sets of inkjet prints mounted on wood bracings, where mirrors, cameras, tripods, and bodies denote the game of gaze reciprocities that seem to fill the exhibition space. This triangle expands on Sepuya's long exploration of the intimate space of an artist's studio and the relationships that occur within it. Such interest is now transplanted to the art gallery, following curator Mackler's interest in investigating the spaces of in-betweenness that exist within art exhibition spaces.

# M + B

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For almost three months, storefront: *The Poet and the Critic*, and the missing runs parallel to *The Art of Our Time*, MOCA's redrawing of postwar art's conventional chronologies. A big reframing of the museum's contemporary art collection, *The Art of Our Time* emphasizes the affinities among artists, told in relation to their shared institutional affiliations, their art schools and galleries, and major historical events. *The Art of Our Time* decenters the canonical sense of New York as contemporary art's cradle, and revisits instead the importance of schools like Black Mountain College in the articulation of shared generational conversations and formal developments. It also explores the tightknit interactions between postwar architecture and avant-garde art, revisiting the structural concerns of installation and object-based artists on both coasts. MOCA's show centers desire, sexuality, and the body as major transgenerational concerns, and reconsiders art trends in light of changing modes of production, especially for the post-industrial US-based art collected by MOCA. A Western avant-garde-centric rewriting of history, in other words, proves inadequate for understanding a city whose indebtedness to foreign influences has long been acknowledged.

Discursive gaps are inherent to curating. They exist in most exhibitions, sometimes as substantial conceptual lacks, sometimes as loci where affinity threads weave between pieces, exhibitions, and the visitor's experience. Mackler's concept for *Public Fiction's* residence at MOCA was to explore these gaps as points of entry to *The Art of Our Time*. Thus storefront: *The Public and the Critic*, and the missing acts like a set of captions, comments to the main narrative of that exhibit, and interventions in MOCA's new institutionalized account of the contemporary avant-garde. In a conversation, Mackler remarked on the footnote-like nature of its insertion in MOCA's structure. Slight, subtle additions to the museum's proposal remind one of scribbled notes on a book's margins. The art of our time is, Mackler's counter-exhibit argues, art made today by the young and mid-career artists with a solid presence in the circuit of alternative exhibition spaces like *Public Fiction* and others. These are notes to the contemporary canon from actual young practitioners situated in the city of Los Angeles.

The last of the captions points to Nancy Lupo's *Bench 2016 (2016)*: "Bench 2016, on view in a white Dodge Caravan, license plate 7KAA008 parked near 2130-2178 Castilian Drive, Los Angeles CA 90068." I go back to my car, miraculously parked on one of MOCA's side streets, sip the rest of that iced coffee, mostly melted now, and type the address on my phone. Out of downtown, onto the freeway, off the freeway, into Hollywood, up the hills, past the park, up and up, past apartment buildings, houses, and then mansions overlooking the mussed metropolis. To my right there's a steep cliff with cacti. On my left I spot the white van. As at MOCA's storefront, I lean against the windows to get glimpses of a long pine bench in the back of the vehicle. Thousands of yards of dental floss weave through the bench's scaffolding. Hundreds of little branches of spray millet hang from the structure. This is Nancy Lupo's piece, a workbench that is also a garden, inside a van.

*Public Fiction's* vitrine-like gallery is spatially equivalent to the museum's gift shop, across the square, on street level. This mirroring pays homage to *Public Fiction's* original emplacement: a storefront in the Highland Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, where Mackler started her independent project in 2010. After five years of working in that East Los Angeles suburb, *Public Fiction* is now a nomadic gallery. Property value escalated in Highland Park since she started, a gentrification that occurred partly due to the presence of alternative art and music venues like hers, as well as other services targeting the young, creative, middle-class Angelenos displacing the Latin@ community from the area. As is often the case, art got caught in the middle of complex processes of value transformation. *Public Fiction* got expelled from its Highland Park storefront by the very processes that enabled it and that it helped set in motion.

# M + B

What has remained stable, however, is Public Fiction's dual nature as a publication and an exhibition project. Both, in Mackler's words, "accumulate content and layers of sense." The show makes evident how Mackler builds the layered articulation of meanings: works and words are located on the gallery's walls, on its windows, freestanding within it, and outside. Some are activated in a projection room — "like a movie theater," she has said — and others inside the museum's main galleries and hallways. The related publication can be accessed at [publicfiction.moca.org](http://publicfiction.moca.org), which gathers installation shots, pictures taken at the artists' studios, stills from the screened films, fragments from the text-based pieces, and texts by Corrine Fitzpatrick and Quinn Latimer. "Together," as Chris Kraus wrote in *Where Art Belongs*, her monograph on alternative art practice in Los Angeles, "the writing and the visual work form a system in which (as in life) meaning occurs through accretion."

Earlier this spring, the first exhibition of the twofold storefront: *The Poet and the Critic*, and *the missing*, featured *Song of the Andoumboulou: 148 & Sweet Safronia's Wave Unwoven* (2016) by renowned poet, novelist, and critic Nathaniel Mackey. Mackey's poetry was fixed on the window inside frames that remind one of computer screens, boxes that make one want to scroll down his stanzas, a gesture that curator Mackler had already initiated in the online publication accompanying the project. "Long since in some room reminiscing, long on / something said said again. A symphonette / of beaks, bits of wood scrap, wheese what / there / was of it left ..." Mackey writes, referring to the lit gallery behind his vinyl words. "We knew it wasn't up to us. / We knew it was a game. We enjoyed it / High chiming strings way back in the mix / re- / buffed us, a remote broadcast it seemed." One picture shows the morning party sunrays on a misty chilly porch.

Also in storefront: *The Poet and the Critic*, and *the missing*'s opening show were works by artist Nevine Mahmoud and award-winning novelist and essay writer Lynne Tillman. Mahmoud's *Fluid mechanics/ objective parts* (2016), focuses on the material aspects of her creations, sexy emulations that exude self-referentiality and intimacy as well as contention. Their forms speak of fluidity, self-contradiction, change, morphing. As if they traced the formal extortion suffered by points in space, printed on shiny, velvety, pink plastic. A perfect counterbalance to Mahmoud's figures are Lynne Tillman's words. Her *Ode to DCW (Dining Chair Wood)* (2016) appears inside a light box on the gallery wall, and reads: "Made of wood, like the Eames chairs, covered in hard foam rubber that didn't show traces of bodies pressed upon them," responding to the materiality of Mahmoud's work and the underground pieces of our time's new canon. Tillman's words pose the unavoidable question: where do each of us position ourselves amid this contention?

Despite *The Art of Our Time*'s welcome revisiting of the canonical stories of recent art history, the exhibit remains strongly faithful to the autonomy of art and its exceptionality. It engages with its local and tourist audiences through traditional didactic captions, explanatory texts, and short videos hosted on the institution's website. However, by hosting a rotating selection of smaller exhibitions such as storefront: *The Poet and the Critic*, and *the missing*, MOCA allows its audience to profit from the exploratory character of independent curatorial practice, as well. With their informality, platforms such as Public Fiction are raw fresh winds that help invigorate the museum's more constrained institutional agenda. Conversely, Public Fiction benefits from the legitimation of inhabiting MOCA for three months. It expands its audience, it receives a budget, it is able to commission new works and engage in fair trade with its artists. Lauren Mackler's vision is backed by one key piece of the national art establishment, and artists become gatekeepers in the translation between the canon and the varied art production that a megalopolis like Los Angeles generates — the symbiotic relationship between more established and smaller institutions is mirrored by that of the writers to the objects in the exhibit. As Corrine Fitzpatrick writes: "Poets use words to mine mysteries and thus can provide language — the wardrobe of reason — to objects existing in space," and Mackler's show helps mine the mysteries of MOCA's attempt to redraw the canon within the milieu of art production in 2016 Los Angeles.

*Paloma Checa-Gismero is a PhD candidate in art history, theory, and criticism in the University of California, San Diego.*

# M+B



## Considering Nevine Mahmoud's Three Isolated Effects

By E.D. Noice  
May 11, 2016

On a lonely hill above Los Angeles I find myself texting a complete stranger in order to be taken to an exhibition I know nothing about. Typically when I'm asked to write about art, I've at least heard of the gallery, and if not, I'm able to familiarize myself prior to visiting the show by reviewing photos and reading a press release. A barren website and a cryptic appointment e-mail containing the word 'access' confirming my reservation are all that lies between myself and the exhibition.

The stranger turns out to be Lewis Teague Wright, the 'Gallery Director' for transient art space Lock Up International that has hosted shows in London, Frankfurt and Mexico City. On this particular day Nevine Mahmoud's Three Isolated Effects exhibition, running from April 18 to 24, is showing in a 10×10 space in a Public Storage facility in Los Angeles' Elysian Park neighborhood and is made up of three sculpture pieces by London-born and LA-based Mahmoud.



Nevine Mahmoud, Three Isolated Effects, 2016.

The abstract ambiguity of Mahmoud's pieces marry perfectly with their surroundings. Contained within the walls of a storage unit, we understand there is value. There is worth in the work. In the same way that value is given to art objects displayed in the white cube, Mahmoud's Three Isolated Effects, too, feels right at home in a space with its function of storing a person's valuables.

With construction going on both above and below the unit that houses the show, I become acutely aware of the delicacy of viewing art in a way I'd never realized. The floors and walls of the space are made of creaking and groaning plywood—the kind that noise and movement flow through freely. The banal act of walking from one piece to another to view it becomes a disruptive and self-conscious one. At times it leads me to focus on factors outside of the art, influencing the viewing experience.

Mahmoud's most formally recognizable and least abstract piece is a colorful, to-scale beach ball. Without a list of titles or materials to refer to, I'm left to observe exactly what's in front of me. Its glossy finish and stillness leads me to believe it is made of ceramic—making it a replica of a delicate, light object made of a different, yet equally fragile material. Diagonally across from the ball is a free-standing fibre-glass piece of what I can only guess was once a jacuzzi or bath. Smooth and white like the faux-porcelain of any domestic tub on one side, and rough and painted a bright, chalky, Pepto-Bismol pink on the reverse.



# M+B

Almost invisible due to its hue and broad surface is a golden, canary yellow panel to the right. It lies nearly flush against an already yellowed plasterboard wall, creating a subtle and atmospheric piece that complements and observes the installation alongside it, without leaving an intrusive impression. The pieces conjure nostalgia in both their formal and conceptual existences. The colors and materiality of all three artworks make them familiar, even when a piece's shape or size is surreal.



Nevine Mahmoud, *Three Isolated Effects*, 2016.  
Installation view. Courtesy of Lock Up International.

It's rare to see a show with a title, environment and works that so succinctly combine and freely converse between themselves. *Three Isolated Effects* achieves what many Los Angeles art shows miss out on; existing outside of the city's influence. Blanket statements about a place as diverse and complex as this one are typically invalid, but there are two truths that are proven exceptions to this rule: that Los Angeles has a lot of space and light. Although the white cube is an equalizer, it's hard to ignore how these two physical elements exist and inhabit this Californian city. Mahmoud's show, like others put on by Lock Up International, become truly free of existing in any one location.

As curator Teague Wright leads me through the labyrinth of identical hallways and safety-orange metal unit doors, in a generic Public Storage facility, in an ordinary residential suburb, these two truths of LA fall away—we could be anywhere. This anonymity, and the Lock Up International website's lack of explanation, leads to an art exhibition palette cleanser, one that asks you to forget the white cube. Instead you're invited to pay attention only to what is around you, and in front, lending itself tremendously to Mahmoud's show, as abstract sculpture typically requires even a modest suspension of disbelief. This return to basics is both refreshing and eye-opening, leaving me glad to know that the places and modes of how we view art have a dialogue all their own, being hashed out on an international scale.\*\*

# M + B

## MOUSSE

### Playtime

By Andrew Berardini  
Issue 52  
February 2016

Inverted gears warp inward, raw metal with an organic curve. A post-industrial sea creature, this mouthy hunk of raw metal plunks onto a slick primary-hued plinth, raised just off the floor. Balls in the colors of faded ice cream sag without bounce. Chopped slides arced and prone beam in more cheerful primaries their unuseful curves, some magic of modern material cast just so for the whimsy of children. Old car parts cast shadows on photo paper like those nuclear winters you hear about where the flash of the explosion makes vaporized bodies permanent shadows on thick walls. And these special stones carved just so, a calcite peach, a disembodied alabaster tit, they sit on these bright primary plinths too, though the latter was spotted in a makeshift bar sitting on the glossy surface of a piano, regaled with cheap barroom chatter and an instrumental from the keys of Wham's immortal Careless Whispers. Playground minimalism plunked with curved stones from the pornographic end of Noguchi or Hepworth, the work of Nevine Mahmoud is all of these things.

The locked weirdness between modern materials and shapely living bodies, the natural and unnatural, a yearning for some kind of order refused with a chop, the roughest metal lingering on those perfect plinths. Dangerous pussies or vagina dentata or whatever, anyway you cut those lopsided circles you still don't put your fingers in them. The stones on the other hand beg for a soft touch to see if its translucent skin as yielding as it looks. The peach, though suggestive, still feels PG, laying a finger on that can go down without a hint of the illicit. But wanting to touch the disembodied boob (even thinking of it as a boob without a body) feels just a little bit creepy. One doesn't often view sculpture begging to be handled.

Every time I see one of John McCracken's spacey, leaning planks, I want to smear a greasy thumb across the perfect sheen of its surface. I yearn to mar its perfection with my imperfect, squelching, sweating body. The triumph over the messy living over the perfection of these objects' inhumanly (or post-humanly) modern materials. His work has become easy shorthand for me in thinking about contemporary commodity fetishism and its attendant alienation, another way to throw my body on the machine.

Most minimalists, though less fetish-y, still beg for a hand to finger their unhandled forms and make them more human. If seen as a cautionary tale of our sometimes disastrous love affair with machines, Donald Judd and Carl Andre look like ignored Cassandras making monuments to the tragedy of disappeared bodies. But seen as they wished themselves and their work to be understood, they were butch ultra-literalists. They wanted things that could not be anything but what they were, sucked of all content, smashing old illusions, doing it with all the romance of a stack of plywood. Monuments to an emptied-out monumentality, or truly (at least to me) triumphal sculptures to industry at the moment when its force started to fail. They poured their concrete and stacked their bricks just as all the American steel mills went rust belt and their factories and foundries were dubbed Superfund sites. In chopped forests and mine runoff, in quarried mountains and chemical treatments, the EPA might be able to better tell you how much toxic wastes goes into the creation of that literal geometry of industrial manufacture. Industrial materials were also employed in that generation by female artists as well but to very different effect. Eva Hesse and Alina Szapocznikow made corporeal sculptures with these materials but found themselves in early graves, most likely from their unmasked exposure to their media's carcinogenic chemicals. Szapocznikow, a Jew during World War II, had survived Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen and peritoneal tuberculosis, both experiences that brought a contemplation of corporeality to her work in all its fragile mortality and occasional sex appeal, but it was likely the polyester resins that gave her the breast cancer that eventually took her life. Also a casualty of Nazism, Hesse as a child made it out of Germany, but her uncle and grandparents died in concentration camps. Clearly less representational than Szapocznikow's cast body parts, Hesse's sculptures differed greatly from Judd and Andre in its palpable psychological moods, organic forms, and occasional sexual innuendo.



"New Babylon" installation view at Roberts & Tilton, Culver City, 2015.  
Courtesy: the artist and Roberts & Tilton, Culver City



Above: Alina Szapocznikow, *Aufgehört* c. 1968. © Alina Szapocznikow by SIAE, Rome, 2018. Courtesy: Estate Alina Szapocznikow / Fiori Stenalewski / Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris. Photo: Fabrice Goussat  
 Bottom left: John McCracken, *Flash*, 2010. Courtesy: David Zwirner, New York / London  
 Bottom, right: Barbara Hepworth, *Large and Small Forms*, 1954. © Barbara Hepworth Estate. Courtesy: The Pier Arts Centre Collection, Orkney



1. *Vitrine project* (detail), 2015. Courtesy: JGAN, Los Angeles; 2. Studio view, 2015. Courtesy: the artist; 3. *Flash*, 2010. Courtesy: the artist; 4. From left to right: c. 2015, mouth, 2015, knee, 2015. Courtesy: the artist; 5. *Fast & Loose with color box*, 2015. Courtesy: Françoise Chabauty Gallery, Los Angeles

The work of Nevine Mahmoud lives in this tradition of sculpture set forth by Hesse and Szapocznikow through a similar use of materials and concerns. But her meditations on her mediums absorb some of the hard edges leftover from a fetish minimalist like McCracken, the tension between the plinth and the knotted hunk of metal atop it, between the rough industrial skin and the slick surface it rests upon. The corporeality that Nevine brings to her work, through inclusive of both the psychological complex and surreally sexual, also finds a curious element of play: the balls, the slides, those specific colors. Though the elemental metal works look quite menacing in their way, the shapely slides bear a human curve. Looking at Nevine's work, I kept dreaming of Jacques Tati's *Playtime* (1963). In his DVD commentary for the British Film Institute, scholar Philip Kemp described the film's plot as exploring "how the curve comes to reassert itself over the straight line." The hard angles of modernity, cookie cutter mass production, the straight lines that the gray worker's walk of the new modern Paris (and the occasional striking color brought by flowers, vivid non-conformists, and the working class). The old Paris construction workers and dancing teenagers walk and move in curved, organic paths and rhythms. Tati's iconic character Mr. Hulot himself in his messy humanity is hilariously and somewhat melancholically lost in the mess of this bloodless, boxy universe. Given this paradigm, it's hard for me not to think of Judd, Andre, and the gang as purveyors of this soulless modernity, and Hesse, Szapocznikow, and Tati as bodies trying to resist its hard geometries on their round bodies, some to more violent effects than others of course (but the world has always been so much harder on women to be sure). This is a false dichotomy perhaps, but I still feel it.

Humor and play itself are rebellions against the efficiencies of modern life, the exhausting churn of perpetual work so many people in the industrial and postindustrial world find themselves in. Our generations ultra-modern materials have long left plywood and concrete behind, but we all stare at the unbroken perfection of computer screens. Apple's triumph was to make the least machine looking of machines; its sleek metal and plastic without orifice as if it was shat from a robot and never saw a human hand (which we artist too much or reduce his work to a single element) this is also a clear tactic of late-capitalism.

"Play" is one of those words that seem to litter contemporary art writing to the point where even I read one of this delightful world with a bit of a pause, but rather than dismissing a cliché, perhaps I'd rather explore why we need to feel this sense of play, why an artist like Nevine choose to make these beautiful, almost classical, post-minimalist objects out of balls and slides, along with those old car parts and menacing hunks of metal. Not a Luddite, I don't wish to attack modernity and its mechanical advancements wholesale but such progress has casualties. The assembly line of death that both Hesse and Szapocznikow barely escaped, the industrial poisons that eventually took them. And though the issues are maybe not so stark, we still somewhat blindly rush forward into futures without thinking of the whiplash of progress, worked to death and always complaining of being "busy," as the old John Lennon song goes, by giving us no time instead of it all. And here in the work of Nevine I find both the promise of play and the material reveal of the suppression of labor, all seen the perspective of an intelligence in full possession of a body aware of the potential casualties of our most modern desires.

# M+B

## Contemporary Art Daily

### “SOGTFO” at François Ghebaly

April 7th, 2015



Nevine Mahmoud, Tied chunks with color box, 2015.  
Image courtesy of François Ghebaly, Los Angeles.

SOGTFO (Sculpture Or Get The Fuck Out) is a critical play on the misogynistic acronym TOGTFO (Tits Or Get The Fuck Out), a prompt directed at anyone claiming to be female within online boards, chats, and forums. This prompt, which bridges “accepted” adolescent immaturity and the most menacing forms of misogyny, points to the pernicious “made by and for men” sentiment that persists in cultural realms both high and low.

Under such hegemonic primacy, male artists tend to be elevated far above their female peers, and the notion of genius is largely reserved for men. This bias resides most resolutely in the discourse surrounding the practice of sculpture, in which an emphasis on grandeur functions as the new phallus of nations, churning out massive works for even more massive sales floors, collections, and institutions.

This exhibition argues against the predominantly patriarchal imagination that has defined sculptural form, and it aims to reveal the energy, intensity, and originality being forged by artists who exchange the emptiness of grand gestures for complexity, criticality, humor, and meaningful gravitas.

Without discrediting or disregarding history, the exhibition makes a case in and for the present—a time when the market has nearly consumed every aspect of the maker—by turning our attention to five contemporary artists whose gestures in form embody the now and point to the new in Sculpture. Spanning three generations, the show introduces emerging artists Kelly Akashi, Nevine Mahmoud, and Kathleen Ryan, alongside established artists Andrea Zittel and Amanda Ross-Ho, illustrating a shift in mentorship and aesthetic lineage that argues against longstanding—and all-too-gendered—systems of artistic valuation and authority.

SOGTFO is curated by Charlie White, with accompanying texts by Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer and Charlie White.

## ArtReview

### SOGTFO (Sculpture or Get the Fuck Out)

28 February – 11 April 2015, François Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles

May 2015 Issue  
By Arturo Berardini

Tits or Get the Fuck Out. In the darker, scuzzier and more diabolically playful corners of the Internet, where identity is at best fluid and undefined, TOGTFO is, according to writer Quinn Norton, 'a transgression to test a new person's ability to participate within an in-group'. Though directed at women or users perceived to be women, you're not supposed to show your tits. That's maybe the worst possible response. Or the worst outside of taking it as a literal request and getting upset. Better is, maybe, 'All I have are your mom's and nobody wants those', or just ignore the fuckers.

The question presumes that the majority of /b/tards, anons, trolls, hackers and lurkers are dudes, which most of them are, and the Internet's language, culture and criteria have been largely set by men. Artist and exhibition curator Charlie White asserts that sculpture has had the same history, but that it shouldn't have had to, thus the show's title.



Of all the different media, sculpture has a particularly cock-dragging history and is dude-dominated in general, in LA in particular, and the gang of artists in this show engages with that history, collectively pushing the medium into new places. Of the six artists, all ladies, two midcareer and a trio of emergers, none are flashing their tits or buckling under the offence of patriarchy. With humour, panache, skill and style that matches and surpasses their male peers, the work of these artists supersedes any bullshit gendering.

Amanda Ross-Ho's Untitled Sculpture (Once U Go Black) (2015) quietly engages with LA sculpture icon Charles Ray's subtle and significant rescalings. Here the upsized bottom hips of a mannequin sport a fade-to-black of panties stacked atop panties creeping down its legs – an American Apparel model tweaked for surreal effect. The sculpture doesn't read here as an objectified body but rather as a bit of amusing motherfuckery (to use the Anonymous term) with display, bodies and commerce.

Kathleen Ryan beautifully engages with display and material in Bacchante (2015), which has concrete balloons tumbling down a granite plinth, a bulbous match for Nevine Mahmoud's ceramic balls in Basketball (2014) and Beachball (2015). Rounding onward, Mahmoud's gnarly, heavy metal spiked rings, plunked on and off pristine coloured platforms with one particularly sizeable vagina dentata calling itself O (2015), matches in shape and title Kelly Akashi's surreal free-floating wall, dubbed Figure oO (2015). Standing with two circles cleanly chopped out, the wall displays the artist's disembodied hand cast in wax. Rather than assertive phallic obelisks, we have assertive holes all the more badass for their yonic vacancies. Andrea Zittel's Flat Field Work #1 (2015) reads in this context as a bridge. Zittel takes issues of domesticity to a level of autarchic seriousness. Her perspicacity and facility with materials make craft, previously considered 'women's work', simply art.

Given the male-dominated history of sculpture, the ladies here offer neither a junior alternative nor a reactionary riposte, but a sophisticated set of objects working with essential issues of sculpture in ways that the gentlemen just couldn't. White locates with these artists an important shift in our understanding of art (especially the history of it in Los Angeles) and its relationship to gender, flowing out of feminist and trans advances but also the postgender continuum offered by online avatars. Sarah Lehrer-Graiwer sums up the possibilities beautifully in the final line of her essay that accompanies the exhibition: 'an all-female sculpture show is pretty cool, but an all-female Senate would be so much cooler'.



# Los Angeles Times

## Review 'Seven Reeds,' exploring the 'work' in works of art

December 4, 2014

By Christopher Knight

"Seven Reeds," a group show of painting and sculpture at Overduin & Co., takes its title from a short 1949 documentary by Italian filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni.

The five artists don't illustrate his film's narrative, which followed the production of synthetic rayon from natural materials all the way to finished fashions. But, using Italian Arte Povera as a starting point, they do operate in a murky, sometimes provocative area somewhere between nature and culture.

Jacob Kassay's irregularly shaped canvases are covered in finely splattered paint that looks alternately like a celestial star-map or cheap linoleum. Stretched denim torn with holes by Valentina Liernur is part working-class fashion statement, part homage to Lucio Fontana's slashed paintings, where real spaces intrude on art's typical illusions.

A glazed ceramic basketball by Nevine Mahmoud is a primordial vessel crossed with an impossible modern toy. Fredrik Vaerslev pushes wooden slats out from the wall on steel struts, the paint-splotched surface transforming a forklift pallet into an artist's palette.

Overall, the show's most consistently compelling works are Julia Rommel's abstract paintings, such as "Blitz." Rommel stretches and re-stretches linen in rectangles of different sizes. The creases formed in the material establish interior drawing along the paintings' margins, and finally she paints those linear edges and shapes in bright hues.

The result is a considered composition that records itself coming into being. In part, "Seven Reeds" contemplates the determined power of work within any work of art.

Overduin & Co., 6693 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, (323) 464-3600, through Dec. 20. Closed Sun. and Mon.