



CRITICS' PICKS

CURRENT PAST

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Art Spiegelman
"Rituals of Rented Island"
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Paulo Bruscky
Diane Simpson

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Matthew Brannon
Bob Mizer and Tom of Finland

San Francisco

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Holt Quentel

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Reggio Emilia

Michael van Ofen

Geneva

Toni Grand

Vilnius

David Maljković

Luxembourg City

London

"I'll Be Your Mirror"

HERALD ST
2 Herald Street
November 24–January 19

The second iteration of this group exhibition curated by Nicky Verber seems to have merely reintroduced Swiss design duo Robert and Trix Haussmann's *Lehrstück VI, Spiegelperspektive*, 1979/2013—an over ten-foot-tall square mirror with radiating wooden molding that surrounds a door-size gap carved at its center. (The work is now on the wall opposite from where it was first installed in September.) With that single mirrored point of reference, this two-part show cleverly plays with and exploits the notion of doubling.

Three untitled lush and intriguing abstractions by French painter Bernard Piffaretti from 2012 divide and multiply along the canvases' middle lines, one side doubling the other in a visual structure that most obviously demonstrates the show's thematic notion of repetition. While Michael Wilkinson's monochromatic and Minimalist Lego sculptures *Black Wall 7*, 2013, simulate reductive art as well as brick walls, they also now sit in place of Vanessa Safavi's similarly colored piece *Ourselves in Black Holes like Small Silences (Big)*, 2013, from the first version of the exhibition—a black rectangular work with a miniature blue globe placed on its frame and two others located on the floor. Safavi's second inclusion is a freestanding sculpture *Ourselves in Black Holes like Small Silences (Sculpture)*, 2013, which includes two of the same tiny globes within a black curving shape.

Doubling, according to the philosopher Jacques Derrida, creates the gaps in which more complex—in his case, deconstructive—thinking can occur. Despite Piffaretti's statement that "the double somehow imposed itself. It is not, therefore, an idea," an interesting and cleverly organized exhibition has grown from it.

— Sherman Sam



View of "I'll Be Your Mirror," 2013.

PERMALINK COMMENTS (0 COMMENTS) E-MAIL PRINT

Charles Avery

PILAR CORRIAS
54 Eastcastle Street
November 20–January 11

A young woman with curly red hair and a sketchbook tucked under her arm puzzles over an artwork by Sigmar Polke. Three small children play beside Sol LeWitt's *Cubic Construction*, 1971, poised to climb it at any moment, while a stressed security guard advances. These are scenes not unlike any other in a busy museum or gallery space. Charles Avery's set of drawings, however, envisages these figures among a group exhibition that takes place on The Island, a fictional world that has been central to the Scottish artist's practice since 2004.

Curated by Tom Morton, using Avery's plans for the Museum of Art Onomatopoeia as a guide, The Island's exhibition includes real-life artworks such as Marcel Duchamp's *Etant donnés*, 1946–66, and Jeff Koons's *Balloon Dog (Yellow)*, 1994–2000. The inhabitants are entirely humanlike, each varying in size, shape, and age; the artist even conjures up their distinct personalities by applying superb detail to facial expressions, colorful clothing, and posture, all of which pop from the gray, architectural background. There are gags too: In *Untitled (It Means It Means; Gonzalez-Torres, Ray, Riley, Watteau)*, 2013, a gentleman becomes embroiled in Charles Ray's *Ink Line*, 1987, splashing in the stream of black ink while a rotund gallery assistant appears to shriek in horror. The largest drawing, *Untitled (View of the MoAO from the Direction of the Place de la Revolution with Hammons, Hepworth, Koons, Unknown Easter Island Artist)*, 2013, measuring almost from the ceiling to the floor, is set outside the museum on a lively piazza. A frail man in a rainbow-colored dome hat admires crystal balls for sale on a small rug, and strange creatures—part dog, part monkey—scavenge food from leftover takeout boxes. Other Islanders are shown relaxing on steps or congregating around several more artworks, including a looming Easter Island head. Do these Islanders share our history of art, or are they just viewing a collection of mysterious artifacts from a far-off land? Avery's drawings allow The Island to become a platform for us, the real viewers, to imagine our own narratives, animating the museum and its visitors.

— Grace Beaumont

Charles Avery, *Untitled (View of the MoAO from the Direction of the Place de la Revolution with Hammons, Hepworth, Koons, Unknown Easter Island Artist)*, 2013, pencil, ink, acrylic, and gouache on paper, 8' 3" x 13' 5".

Lee Bul

Maastricht
Navid Nuur

Vigo
Isidoro Valcárcel Medina

Hong Kong
Do Ho Suh

Shanghai
Yangjiang Group

Brisbane
"Voice and Reason"



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Newest Entries

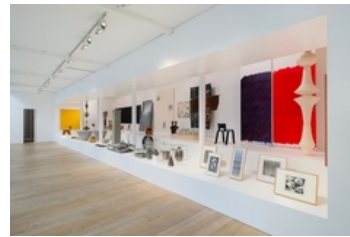
- Melissa Anderson on *Vic + Flo Saw a Bear*
- Tony Pipolo on "First Look" at the Museum of the Moving Image
- Nick Pinkerton on Thom Andersen's *Los Angeles Plays Itself*
- Nick Pinkerton at the 13th International Film Festival of Marrakech
- Melissa Anderson on *The Wolf of Wall Street*
- Paul Dallas at the 11th CPH:DOX in Copenhagen

PERMALINK COMMENTS (0 COMMENTS) E-MAIL PRINT

"Mingei are you here?"

PACE GALLERY | 6-10 LEXINGTON STREET
6-10 Lexington Street, First floor
October 15–January 18

Japanese philosopher-critic Soetsu Yanagi founded the folk craft movement Mingei in the 1920s with the intention of celebrating objects that are "useful, honest with regard to its intended use, authentic, safe, modest, durable" and that avoid "dishonesty, depravity, and luxury." A Western correlation would be the Arts and Crafts movement of the early twentieth century: Mingei was a similarly humble approach to traditional functional forms as well as a response to the influence of modernizing Western ideas. This attitude is still prevalent today—at least according to the Swiss French curator and critic Nicolas Trembley, who organized this deft exhibition.



View of "Mingei are you here?," 2013.

"Mingei Are You Here" presents a museum-like frieze of objects ranging from a nineteenth-century woven basket to ceramics created in the 1950s by Bernard Leach (a Mingei founding member) to a recent painting by Stephen Prina, which features a window blind. But this exhibition is not just a celebration of the quotidian—rather Trembley's broad but considered selection also focuses on art and objects of design. Crucially, he emphasizes the juncture between Eastern and Western cultures and the dichotomy between nature and the natural, the latter of which is best embodied by the works of Isamu Noguchi and Hiroshi Sugimoto.

Sugimoto has contributed two tall elegant sculptures, *Reservoir 1* and *Reservoir 2*, both works 2013, created in collaboration with Kyoto artisans. A subtle light projects from the top of these highly elongated vases, casting a shadow over the ceiling that resembles the tremble of lapping water. Though the spirit of his earlier sculptures, inspired by mathematical formulas, is present, these two pieces celebrate their own materiality (e.g., cypress, tin, and nickel silver) while also evoking a sense of nature in their segmented bamboo-like forms. Instead of documenting a historical moment, "Mingei Are You Here" makes an important and visually intelligent argument for the enduring spirit of the movement.

— Sherman Sam

PERMALINK COMMENTS (0 COMMENTS) E-MAIL PRINT

Manchester

"All That Is Solid Melts into Air"

MANCHESTER ART GALLERY
Mosley Street
October 12–January 19

Curated by artist Jeremy Deller, this Hayward Gallery touring exhibition is simultaneously a love letter to the socially progressive politics that held sway in the UK over the last several centuries and a sharp critique of what Deller views as a recent and rapid increase in the amount of intensive labor our economy demands. It is also an exploration of the trauma of industrialization, which normalized inhumane working conditions and whose ethos has permeated anew into contemporary culture alongside the rise of digital commerce. This is epitomized by Deller's inclusion of a tracking device—designed by Motorola—which is worn on the wrists of Amazon employees and monitors not only how many products they are scanning per minute, but also where exactly they are working at any given moment.



Dennis Hutchinson, *Adrian Street with his father at the pithead of Brynmawr colliery, Wales, 1973*, black-and-white photograph.

The show deeply considers working conditions during the industrial revolution; in addition to photographs, it also features photographs as well as artifacts such as factory bell, a clocking-in clock, and a banner from a workers' march. The most striking works in this exhibition, however, are more contemporary and concern the wrestler Adrian Street. These works include Dennis Hutchinson's 1973 black-and-white photograph *Adrian Street with his father at the pithead of Brynmawr colliery, Wales* and Deller's 2010 documentary *So Many Ways to Hurt You (The Life and Times of Adrian Street)*. Street grew up in a working-class family of Welsh coal miners, with a father who, as he states in Deller's film, "never said a kind word to me in his life." After leaving Brynmawr for London, he became a famous wrestler renowned for dressing in drag in order to intimidate his notoriously homophobic opponents. Hutchinson's image captures the tense moment when Street, in full wrestling costume and proudly wearing his championship belt, reunites with his father and ex-coal miners in his hometown. This image encapsulates how personal liberation and individuality were at odds with industrial Britain, and how they contributed to the latter's eventual demise.

— Ashitha Nagesh

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