

Philadelphia Museum Finally Gets a Hopper

It's hard to believe that the Philadelphia Museum of Art has never had a Hopper.

But every institution has its gaps, and now the Philadelphia Museum is filling in this particular one with "Road and Trees," Edward Hopper's 1962 depiction of a copse silhouetted against the sky.

"When Hopper was painting, the museum wasn't really focused on acquiring contemporary American art," said Timothy Rub, the museum's director. "Now, it's almost too difficult for museums to acquire," he added, given the high prices and scarcity of prime works.

In light of this, the museum is particularly grateful to be receiving the Hopper — along with 50 other significant pieces — from the collection of Daniel W. Dietrich II, a philanthropist who died in September.

Among the other artists represented in the gift are Cy Twombly, Philip Guston, Paul Thek, Eva Hesse and Albert Pinkham Ryder.

Mr. Dietrich was, in particular, a great fan of Thomas Eakins; thus his contribution features 12 works by that artist — 10 paintings and two drawings. Among them are oil sketches that relate closely to major works in the museum's already significant Eakins collection.

The bequest includes archival Eakins material — photographs, pencil studies, his palette and brushes — and platinum print portraits of Walt Whitman that relate to an oil painting of that poet and the frontispiece of the complete edition of his "Leaves of Grass."

In addition, Mr. Dietrich donated \$10 million for an endowment to support the museum's work in contemporary art.

"It's a real game changer," Mr. Rub said. "All sorts of new things become possible as a consequence of an endowment like this."

Evolving Rooms

Upon receiving a commission to do an installation for the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, Samara Golden imagined a series of simple rooms containing little except laptops and neatly folded towels, evoking monotony and isolation.

"Like a nightmare of having everyone in their own rooms

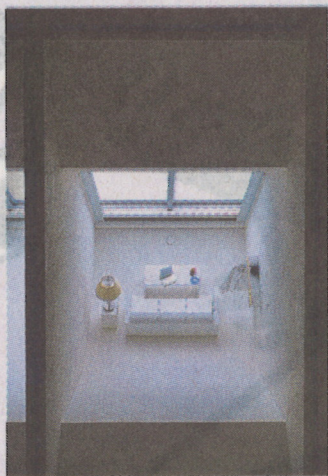
Inside Art

Robin Pogrebin



EDWARD HOPPER/WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, COLLECTION OF DANIEL W. DIETRICH II

The Philadelphia Museum of Art received Hopper's "Road and Trees" (1962) from the collection of Daniel W. Dietrich II.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND NIGHT GALLERY, LOS ANGELES

A detail of the installation "A Trap in Soft Division" in progress by Samara Golden.

with no entrance or exit, living a disconnected life — despite being connected via the Internet," Ms. Golden said. "Then I just always need to change things and make it feel more complicated."

It was the gallery space itself that inspired her to rethink her approach: 18 ceiling vaults with skylights.

"It almost looks like a cathedral; the light is really beautiful," she said. "I've just never been able to work in a space like this before."

So instead, Ms. Golden has created a room in each vault — "18 different ways of being and thinking," she said — made up of three types. The plain, hotel-like rooms with laptops are lit with cold LED bulbs; the rooms with

curtains are warmer, with coffee tables full of leftover drinks and desserts.

The rooms with stained-glass windows are cozy and cluttered, with crocheted blankets thrown over the sofas, spilled drinks on the coffee table, piles of clothes on the floor and laundry baskets full of socks. "It's really messy in there," Ms. Golden said.

Kirchner as Draftsman

When Galerie St. Etienne opens its booth at the Art Dealers Association of America's art show, which runs Wednesday through March 6 at the Park Avenue Armory, it will feature watercolors, pastels and drawings by the German Expressionist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

The works belonged to the financier Robert Lehman, who died in 1969, and are among the few in his extensive collection that were not acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art

(although they were, until recently, on extended loan to the museum).

Mr. Lehman's family is now selling 30 pieces, which focus on Kirchner's development as a draftsman from 1905 through his Swiss exile in the 1920s. Mr. Lehman purchased the works as a group in 1959 from a German dealer, who obtained them from the artist's estate.

"Drawings were the essence of his life," said Jane Kallir, a director of the gallery. "And the sketches are the essence of his drawings."

Galerie St. Etienne will show all 30 works, along with several Kirchner original lithographs and other drawings, in an exhibition opening on March 29. (Works by Kirchner are also in the Neue Galerie's current "Munch and Expressionism" show.)

"He wanted to create a new pictorial language that would go beneath the essence of the visible world," Ms. Kallir said, adding that Kirchner used his sketches to capture "what he termed 'the ecstasy of first sight,' the emotions that are evoked when you first see something."

Early Selfies

In Tanya Bonakdar's booth at the Art Dealers show, that gallery will show a new body of work by the London-based artist Gillian Wearing, who in 1997 won the Turner Prize. The solo presentation includes nearly 150 original Polaroid self-portraits from Ms. Wearing's personal archive dated 1988 to 2005.

"Her early work was tapping into a prediction of social media," Ms. Bonakdar said. "It's sort of selfies before they were known as selfies, instant the way Instagram is instant, documenting herself in this intimate way"

Sculpting Script

In the late 1960s Ed Ruscha started making drawings first out of graphite, then gunpowder, depicting script letters that looked sculptural, tangible. Now more than 45 of these works — including one from the artist's collection — have been gathered for a show that opens on May 6 at Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art in New York.

"Developing out of the line of cursive handwriting," said Dieter Buchhart, the show's curator, "he found a way to transform that line into a three-dimensional object."



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK AND MAUREEN PALEY, LONDON

"Untitled" (2000), a Gillian Wearing self-portrait.


[login](#) | [register](#) | [ADVERTISE](#) | [BACK ISSUES](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#)

 [search](#)
[ARTGUIDE](#) | [IN PRINT](#) | [500 WORDS](#) | [PREVIEWS](#) | [BOOKFORUM](#) | [A & E](#) | [中文版](#)
[DIARY](#) | [PICKS](#) | [NEWS](#) | [VIDEO](#) | [FILM](#) | [PASSAGES](#) | [SLANT](#)
[Michael Werner](#)

CRITICS' PICKS

[CURRENT](#) | [PAST](#)

New York

David Hammons
 Mira Schor
 Zarouhie Abdalian
 Eileen Quinlan
 Hilton Als
 Patti Smith
 Greg Parma Smith
 Koen van den Broek
 Chris McCaw
 "The Illusive Eye"
 Luigi Ghirri
 Silvia Gruner
 Anna Ostoya
 Jack Early
 Anri Sala
 "Printing Women: Three Centuries of Female Printmakers 1570–1900"
 Robert Ryman

Los Angeles

Judy Fiskin
 Mariah Garnett
 Saul Fletcher
 Sandra Gibson and Luis Recoder
 Jesse Mockrin
 Nathaniel Mellors
 Laure Prouvost
 Fiona Banner
 Seth Price
 Jessi Reaves and Sophie Stone
 "Performing the Grid"

San Francisco

Samara Golden
 Anthony Disenza

Chicago

"Present Standard"
 Courtney Cooper
 Charlotte Moorman

Cleveland

Xavier Cha

Minneapolis

Andrea Büttner

Portland

Paige Powell

Washington, DC

"WONDER"

Toronto

Leslie Hewitt

London

DAS INSTITUT
 Channa Horwitz
 Heather Phillipson

San Francisco

Samara Golden

YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS
 701 Mission Street
 March 11–May 29

Approach and peer down into an abyss. Wreathed in matte white—a tech-world fetish color—the parapet begs to be bent over. Do so and dive into an aerial view of eighteen chambers, neatly parceled into three rows of six. Each chamber contains a rectangular couch oriented toward a large window—or is it a screen?

This compressed, airless cosmos is Samara Golden's *A Trap in Soft Division*, 2016. For her largest installation to date, the artist showcases the antiseptic, adolescent bravado of minimalist lifestyle porn. The first row of rooms is punctuated by blouses shrugged off, laptops abandoned, and red cups knocked over; the third adds frilly curtains, laundry baskets, and a stray blue afghan. Nestled in the middle of the lineup are scenes distinctly more saturated—faux stained glass made of lighting gels and black caulk, Tiffany lamps, more afghans, more cups, more stuff. Though familiar, their occupancy here is that of invaders in an inhospitable land. Likewise, this center aisle is overgrown with houseplants, mostly *Epipremnum aureum*, also known as devil's ivy. Something sinister is indeed afoot: That cavernous maw is not an orifice, but a mirror; the rooms are not below, but above and upside down; those windows are not even screens, but skylights, flushing the gallery with rosy light, then edging it in blue.

Golden's notion of a "sixth dimension," in which past, present, and future inhabit the same space, can perhaps be likened to the archives of a digital backup. Yet what she captures best is the desperation for those files, the sense that the bits of life they contain are constantly under threat. To protect them, from a fire for instance, one protocol is Halon suppression, an extinguishing agent that leaves no residue. The result is a room with the oxygen sucked out.

— Catherine Damman



View of "Samara Golden: A Trap in Soft Division," 2016.

[f](#) [t](#) [g+](#) [v](#) [p](#) [e](#) [p](#) [p](#) [e](#) [r](#) [m](#) [l](#) [i](#) [n](#) [k](#) [c](#) [o](#) [m](#) [m](#) [e](#) [n](#) [t](#) [s](#) [p](#) [r](#) [i](#) [n](#) [t](#)

[< return to current picks](#)

[links](#)

VW
 VENEKLASSEN
 WERNER

David
 Zwirner
 New York
 London

Gavin
 Brown's
 enterprise

GLADSTONE
 GALLERY

ROBERT
 MILLER
 GALLERY

P.P.O.W

CARDI
 GALLERY

team

DAVID
 NOLAN
 NEW YORK

MAUREEN PALEY

CATRIONA
 JEFFRIES

T MAGAZINE

An Artist Fascinated by the Art of Magic

The Story of a Thing

As told to EMILY SPIVACK MAY 24, 2016

In this series for T, the writer and author of “Worn Stories,” Emily Spivack, interviews creative types about their most prized possessions.

For her current show at Yerba Buena, “A Trap in Soft Division,” the artist Samara Golden works within the limitations of physical materials to conjure intangible realities and disorienting environments, an approach similar to how magicians embrace the tools at their disposal to create illusions. Here, Golden considers the intersection between her work and that of illusionists through her collection of Genii: The International Conjurors’ Magazine.

I have a stack of about 15 magazines called Genii: The International Conjurors’ Magazine that I got when I first moved to Los Angeles about seven years ago. The magazines are low budget — with graphic design you’d use if you were putting together a yearbook — but there’s a poetry to these special almanacs. They’re trade magazines for metaphysical things. The issues in my collection range from 1981-97 and they all include drawings for how to do magic tricks and fancier stage-show tricks, a short story section, obituaries for

magicians and ads at the end. One ad is selling something called an “Illusion System,” which looks like something you’d stand on onstage. Some of the covers feature old magicians, but the one I’m looking at right now is a photo of a guy with a leather jacket, feathered blond hair that’s backlit and a beam of light coming out of his hands.

I know in L.A. there are a lot of people who are really into magic, but I’m more of a voyeur and appreciator. I admire how people commit to it like a religion and model their lives around it. It’s definitely a form of art; it requires a different kind of life to pursue it fully.

I’ve always wondered whether being a magician is tricking someone into believing something or if what a magician does is part of his belief system. I think that magicians need to be able to believe in what they’re doing in order to make people believe it too. In my own work, I have to believe in the realities I’m trying to create and only after that can it start to mean something to anybody else. I want to create an impossible place, a place that nobody could actually go in real life. Like, for a show I had at Canada, I wanted you to hover over four different scenes and in seeing them from an aerial view, you might think of the gallery space as a brain that you were inside.

This might get too abstract, but I like the idea of making art where I have to pull a thought down into a material form and then push it back into an unattainable space. If I had a choice, I would never use mirrors in my work, but I have to use existing materials that reflect and twist the scene enough so that you can experience something unknowable. I don’t want to use too many tricks but the ones I do use are tools to make something that isn’t really of this earth. In that way, what I’m doing is related to what’s inside these magazines, what the magicians are trying to create. That structure they’re building to believe — that’s what I want to be doing, too.

This interview has been edited and condensed.

Samara Golden’s “A Trap in Soft Division” is on view until May 29 at Yerba

See the Most Disorienting Images in Samara Golden's Latest Exhibition

Alyssa Buffenstein, Wednesday, March 16, 2016

SHARE ▾



Samara Golden, *A Fall of Corners*, (2015). Installation view at CANADA New York. Photo: Philip Grauer. Courtesy of CANADA New York.

Artists have the ability to transform spaces in unforeseen ways, which is a particular talent of Los Angeles-based visionary [Samara Golden](#). In her work, art creates a place where past, present, and future exist simultaneously. Her latest installation, "A Trap in Soft Division," is currently on view at [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts](#) in San Francisco.

The exhibition, curated by Ceci Moss, is a topsy-turvy space filled with illusions, which makes for some seriously bewildering photos that have been circulating on social media. Don't even bother trying to understand the artist's largest installation to date using logic—just enter Golden's new version of reality, which she explored in mind-expanding previous exhibitions such as "[The Flat Side of the Knife](#)" at MoMA PS1, as well as in "[A Fall of Corners](#)" at Canada Gallery in New York.

These mirrored spaces are "layers of consciousness," [the artist states](#); if you gaze long into an abyss, you will gaze back onto you(rself). Scroll down for images.

Most Popular



ART WORLD

Hauser, Wirth and Schimmel Is a Gallery Built Like a Museum—What's Really G...



PEOPLE

Goethe-Institut Director Henrike Grohs Killed in Terrorist Attack



ART WORLD

Francis Bacon Paintings Worth \$33 Million Stolen From Madrid Home



ART WORLD

The Best and Worst of the Art World This Week in One Minute



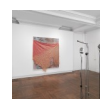
PEOPLE

Who Said This: Ai Weiwei Or Andy Warhol?



ART WORLD


Pierre Bergé-YSL Foundation Dazzles with Exhibition of Nouredine Amir's We...



ART WORLD

11 Things You Should Know about David Hammons Ahead of His Mnuchin Gallery ...

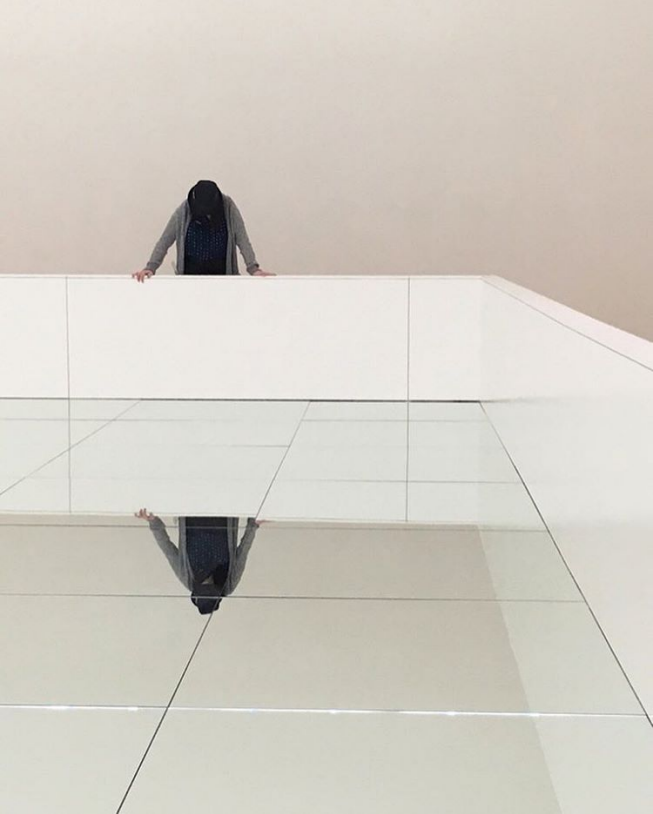
ybca • 1 week ago + Follow



When the mirrors are installed #SamaraGolden's details become disorienting in their precision. –Ben, videographer

58 likes 1 comment Instagram

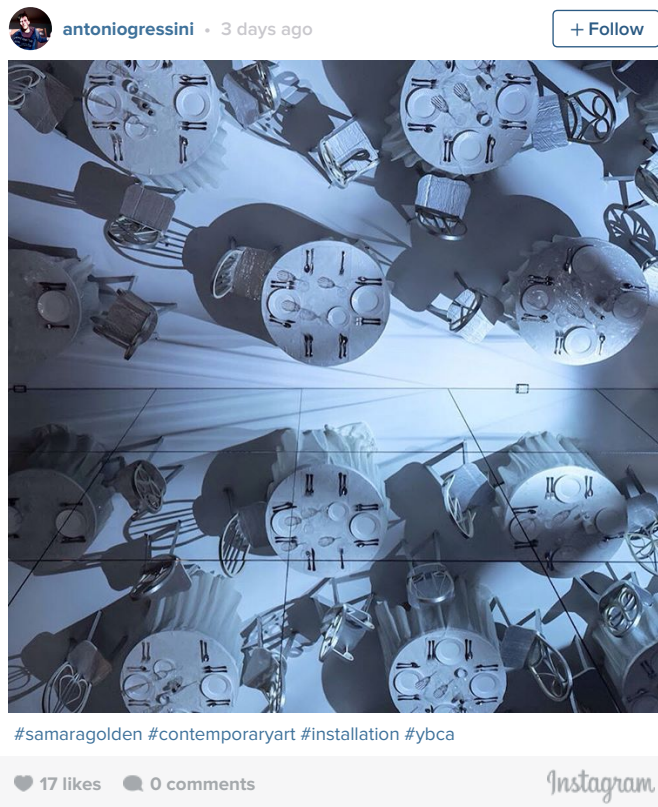
centaschumacher • 3 days ago + Follow



@evethorne looking into Samara Golden's A Trap in Soft Division (amazing, amazing piece)

3 likes 0 comments Instagram

<https://instagram.com/p/BC1qKXSIs1Q/>



At the opening party on Friday, an exhibition happening in tandem, titled "Take This Hammer: Art + Media Activism from the Bay Area" featured "Trump-tillas" by the Great Tortilla Conspiracy, which screen-printed images onto the thin flatbread.

Follow [artnet News](#) on Facebook.



Artist Builds 18 Upside Down Rooms into a Gallery's Ceiling [Exclusive]

Sami Emory (/author/samiemory) – Mar 22 2016



Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.

[Samara Golden \(http://samaragolden.com/home.html\)](http://samaragolden.com/home.html) turns reality on its head in

[A Trap in a Soft Division \(http://www.ybca.org/samara-golden\)](http://www.ybca.org/samara-golden), her largest-ever commissioned work at the [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts \(http://www.ybca.org\)](http://www.ybca.org) (YBCA). Installed in the YBCA gallery's 18 ceiling skylights are 18 inverted rooms. The surreal spaces look lived-in, cluttered with half-folded clothes, half-eaten meals, and half-emptied purses, casting the illusion that someone left these upside down dwellings only seconds before. In fact, Golden describes the experience of *A Trap in a Soft Division* in the show's press release as "almost like being able to see into someone's mind, or being able to see yourself separate from yourself in a dream."

This separation is something unique to this show, especially in contrast to such exaggeratedly immersive environments as her 2015 MoMA PS1 installation,

[The Flat Side of the Knife \(http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/samara-goldens-moma-ps1-installation-is-an-emotional-house-of-mirrors\)](http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/samara-goldens-moma-ps1-installation-is-an-emotional-house-of-mirrors)

. "It's a departure from my past work in that the viewer is more distant, they see the work as almost a mirage separate from themselves," says Golden. "Ultimately it's more about disconnection, and distant far away feelings." Like her previous work, however,

A Trap in a Soft Division brings the viewer into the "sixth dimension—a place where the future, present, and past exist simultaneously," describes the press release. The effect is unsettling. As Golden says, these are places "that couldn't exist on earth." As a result, viewers become voyeurs into alien environments as they look up at the rooms from below, or examine their details in the large mirrors on the gallery's floor.

Below, see the warped perspectives of *A Trap in a Soft Division* through the artist's own eyes, in an selection of shots captured by Golden herself, exclusive to The Creators Project.



Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.



Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.



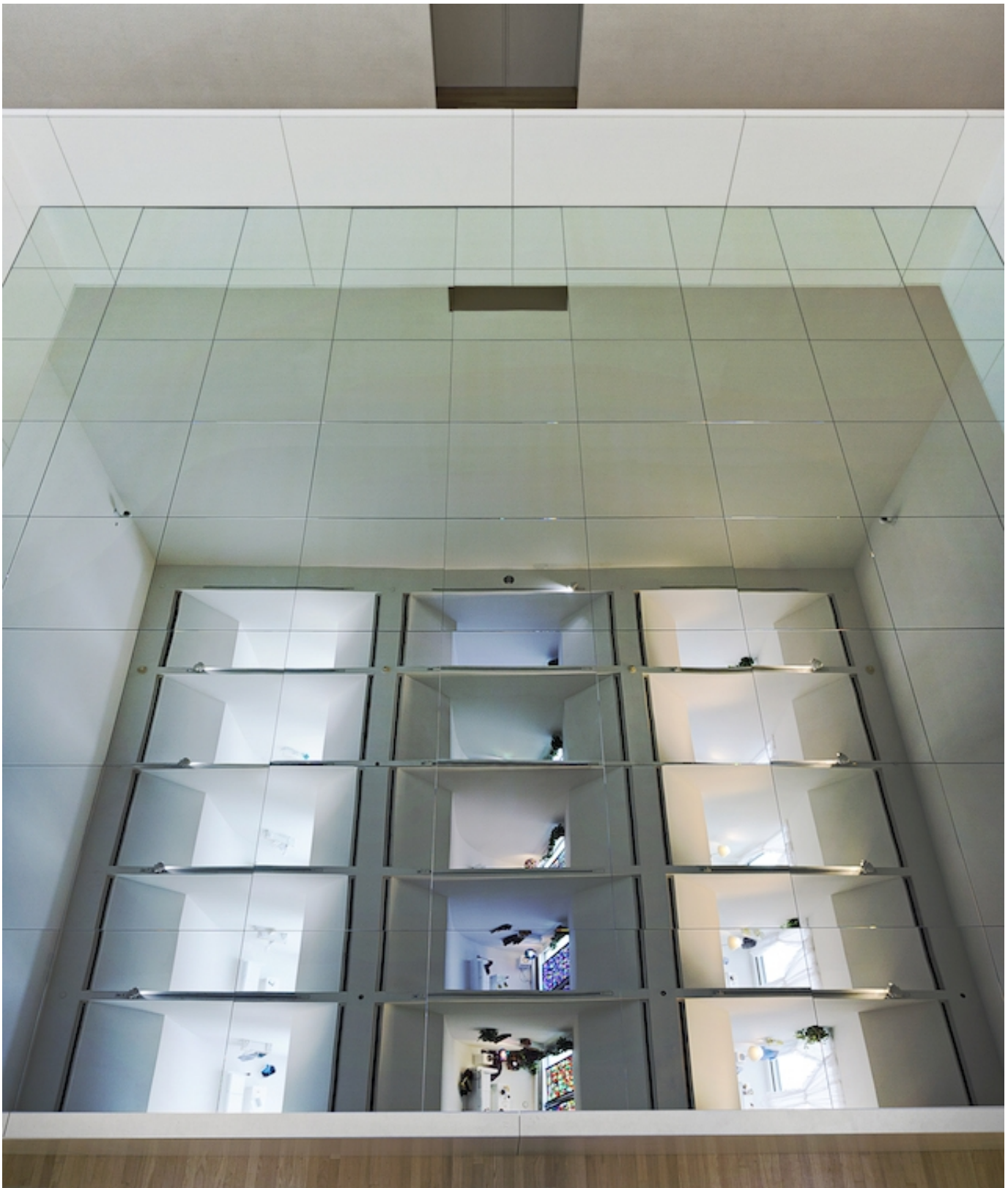
Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.



Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.



Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.



Samara Golden, A Trap in Soft Division, Detail of installation in progress, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2016, Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles.

A Trap in a Soft Division is on show at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts from now until May 29, 2016. Find out about the show on the [YBCA's website \(http://www.ybca.org/samara-golden\)](http://www.ybca.org/samara-golden) and visit [Golden's website \(http://samaragolden.com/home.html\)](http://samaragolden.com/home.html) for more of her works.

We use cookies to help us improve our website. By continuing to use the website you agree to our use of cookies.

[Read our cookie policy \(/terms-and-conditions/\)](/terms-and-conditions/)

Flash Art (<http://www.flashartonline.com/>)

DAILY



[\(http://www.liste.ch/\)](http://www.liste.ch/)



1 / 7 Samara Golden, "A Trap in Soft Division," installation view at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco

(2016). *Courtesy the Artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles. Photography by TK.*

Review (<http://www.flashartonline.com/category/review/>) / May 17, 2016

hare (<http://www.facebook.com/share.php?>

<http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/>) Tweet (<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?>

[rl=http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-](http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/)

[ancisco/](http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/)&text=Samara+Golden+Yerba+Buena+Center+for+the+Arts+%2F+San+Francisco&via=FlashArtOnWeb)

Mail ([mailto:?subject=I wanted you to see this post&body=http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/](mailto:?subject=I+wanted+you+to+see+this+post&body=http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/))

Samara Golden *Yerba Buena Center for the Arts / San Francisco* (<http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/>)

In Samara Golden's "[A Trap in Soft Division](http://www.ybca.org/samara-golden) (<http://www.ybca.org/samara-golden>)," her largest exhibition to date, the cyclical confinement of the present moment provides an autopsy of our contemporary condition.

Golden renders what she calls the "Sixth Dimension" by turning gallery architecture into a light box. Akin to filmstrips in which past, present and future collapse, each "frame" is an instance from life, different yet homogenous.

The viewer stumbles into an atrium-like space. A slick, white wooden trough takes up most of the room, forming a square-ish barricade. You sense before you hear a barely perceptible white noise being pumped into the space. It is reminiscent of a mall, its climate control giving off a whiff of sadist pleasure in safety. Circumambulating the atrium corridor, fellow viewers stares across this abyss of nothingness. Looking inward, a grid of mirrors finally nudges one's vision upward, to look for clues out of this impasse.

Above, nested in eighteen vaulted skylight windows, in three rows of six, are upside-down living rooms, constructed out of foam and other disparate materials, in reduced proportions. The east-facing skylight forms the windows of the individual living spaces, which recall micro lofts in the nearby SoMa neighborhood, where development spurred by the tech industry has reached a fever pitch.

Each room is decorated with "life's necessities," each row customized to a different aesthetic. First: a starter-pack of contemporary loft living, white and minimally designed. Second: the sterility is undercut by a homey Midwestern vibe, illuminated by Tiffany-style table lamps and faux stained-glass windows made out of lighting gels. Third: an amalgamation or compromise of the former two, keeping it minimal while retaining a sense of dowdiness with "country curtains." Strewn about are scarves, in-progress crochet, bowls of fruit, sunglasses, dustpans, tousled clothing and laundry baskets. Still, some empty wineglasses teem on the shelves amid half-opened gifts and spilled red wine, presumably after a night of tame celebration.

Life's messiness contained and sterilized — danger kept at bay. Clarity, not vertigo, results from looking, upward and downward, ad infinitum. In Agamben's notion of "the time of the end," finality is never reached, as it has already arrived as part of the present. Golden prompts us to examine the false perception of the self's boundaries; she pushes us back into the infinite now of our perpetual near-death.

by Jo-ey Tang

read less (<http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/samara-golden-yerba-buena-center-for-the-arts-san-francisco/>)



1 / 7 *Hera Büyüktaşçıyan and Mary Evans, installation view at EVA International (2016). Courtesy the Artists and EVA International. Photography by Miriam O'Connor.*

Report (<http://www.flashartonline.com/category/report/>) / May 16, 2016

Share (<http://www.facebook.com/share.php?>

u=[http%3A%2F%2Fwww.flashartonline.com%2F2016%2F05%2Fwaiting-for-the-barbarians-eva-international-limerick%2F](http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/waiting-for-the-barbarians-eva-international-limerick/)) Tweet (<https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?>

url=[http%3A%2F%2Fwww.flashartonline.com%2F2016%2F05%2Fwaiting-for-the-barbarians-eva-international-limerick%2F&text=Waiting+for+the+Barbarians+EVA+International+%2F+Limerick&via=FlashArtOnWeb](http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/waiting-for-the-barbarians-eva-international-limerick%2F&text=Waiting+for+the+Barbarians+EVA+International+%2F+Limerick&via=FlashArtOnWeb)) Mail ([mailto:?subject=I wanted you to see this post&body=http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/waiting-for-the-barbarians-eva-international-limerick/](mailto:?subject=I+wanted+you+to+see+this+post&body=http://www.flashartonline.com/2016/05/waiting-for-the-barbarians-eva-international-limerick/))

NYBG/125

IMPRESSIONISM:
AMERICAN GARDENS ON CANVAS
THROUGH SEPT 11

CLICK FOR TICKETS

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN



HOME ABOUT ARTNEWS ARTNEWS S.A. ADVERTISE CONTACT US SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ONLINE RESOURCES ▶

The leading source of art coverage since 1902. 🔍

Search this site

Subscribe
Give a Gift
Premium
Back Issues
Digital Editions

ARTISTS — HABITAT



L.A. HABITAT: SAMARA GOLDEN

BY Katherine McMahon POSTED 05/27/16 11:11 AM

L.A. Habitat is a weekly series that visits with 16 artists in their workspaces around the city.

This week's studio: Samara Golden; Boyle Heights, Los Angeles. When I visited Samara Golden's Boyle Heights studio in December, she was preparing a commission for the Yerba Buena Arts Center in San Francisco. Her current workspace adjoins her boyfriend's studio, which is located inside a warehouse. "Right now, I'm a one-person operation and a workaholic, which in L.A. equals isolation," Golden told me. Golden is known for her immersive installations that explore what she refers to as "the sixth dimension," where a multitude of pasts, presents, and futures exist simultaneously.



Samara Golden in her Boyle Heights studio.
©KATHERINE MCMAHON

"I spend a lot of time in my studio by myself," Golden said. "A lot of that time is spent on the computer, emailing. For me, the Internet provides a sort of connection/disconnection paradox." Golden lived in New York before she moved west, and she said she hasn't fully adjusted to being an Angeleno. "In New York, no matter how hard you're working, you always run into friends," she said. "You feel like

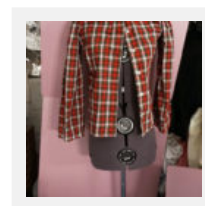
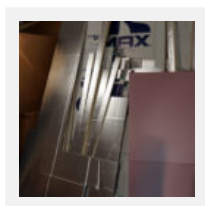
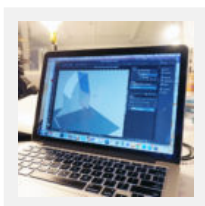
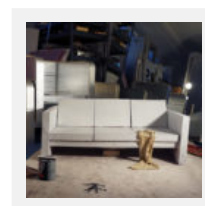
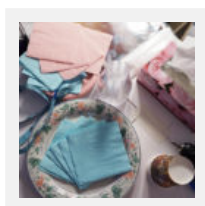
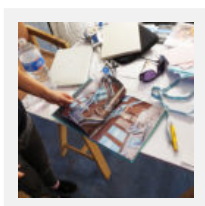
you're a part of things. It was initially hard for me to adjust to how sprawling L.A. is. I often wondered where everyone was. L.A. seems like it's changed a lot in the last five years. There is a lot going on all the time, but you need to make a real effort to be involved here. It's not a place where you can wander into things, and I guess I'm a wanderer, so the two ways of living are at odds."

Her show at Yerba Buena touches on some of these feelings. "One element of the show concerns the strange space that is created when you're in communication with people, but don't have physical access to them. I'm not against the Internet, but I sometimes wonder if it enables us to fall deeper into seclusion, solitude, or alienation. I'm sure the invention of the telephone and television made people feel the same way. Maybe we have a subconscious fear that soon we won't need to be around each other anymore? All this said, I think it's been good for my work to be out here. I truly enjoy the privacy and solitude, at least most of the time."

"A Trap in Soft Division" is on view until May 29 at Yerba Buena, and Golden's book, Samara Golden: The Flat Side of the Knife, was recently published by MoMA PS1.

Below, a look around Golden's Boyle Heights studio.

ALL PHOTOS: KATHERINE MCMAHON



Copyright 2016, ARTnews Ltd, 40 W 25th Street, 6th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10010. All rights reserved.

ARTICLE TAGS

FEATURED
HABITAT

LA HABITAT

SAMARA GOLDEN

SEARCH ART AUCTIONS PRICE DATABASE



RECOMMENDED ARTICLES



TRIAL & IMAGE: COURTROOM ARTISTS CAPTURE THE COLORS AND GESTURES OF JUSTICE



WITH 'GALLERY TALLY PROJECT,' MICOL HEBRON EXAMINES GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE ART MARKET

artcritical

the online magazine of art and ideas

CRITICISM ▣ DISPATCHES

Saturday, April 23rd, 2016

Little Boxes: Samara Golden at Yerba Buena

by Nicole Kaack

Samara Golden: A Trap in Soft Division at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

March 11 to May 29, 2016

701 Mission Street (at 3rd Street)

San Francisco, 415 978 2787



Installation view of "Samara Golden: A Trap in Soft Division," 2016, at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery. Photography by TK.

In her recent exhibition at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Samara Golden captures the eerie feeling of glancing into your neighbor's apartment to realize that its floor plan is identical to your own but in reverse. For "A Trap in Soft Division," Golden has appropriated the Center's natural skylights, iterating the same set of furnishings across the 18 lit alcoves, making three groupings of six installations. Each furniture set is mounted upside down in a skylight, visible in a large, tiled mirror placed below the entire installation. Structured identically throughout — with a couch bookended by table lamps facing a low-coffee table and, behind, floor-to-ceiling windows — divisions between the three sets are denoted by minor transformations of light and ornamentation.



Installation view of "Samara Golden: A Trap in Soft Division," 2016, at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery. Photography by TK.

Although illuminated by the natural light from the real windows in each room, the character of each space is dramatically altered by the shift from that existing warmth to the cool tones introduced by the additional artificial light. The decorations surrounding the windows further the divide, defining each room's style and classing it atmospherically and temporally. The array of rooms may be read either as a single space across a span of time or as six different chambers occupied in different ways. Strewn-about ornaments confer the semblance of life on these spaces, which are at once alien and uncannily familiar.

The unexceptional essentials of life are concentrated into these cubicles of space — disparate tasks brought into an unusual proximity. The arrangement of the accessories hazards a casual tone, one set by a computer, in one variation, which is open and ever so slightly askew, or by a blanket tossed nonchalantly across the stiff back of the sofa in another. Details like an abandoned plate of pasta, still slathered with cooling food, create a space that has just been absented, caught in physical and temporal states of suspension. However much these small gestures are intended to open these spaces to us, their rigidity and uniformity rebuff entry. We are warmly invited into a space that we cannot occupy, in a literal sense, because of its inverted orientation, but also because it is not plastic enough to accommodate the multiplicity of our forms.



Installation view of "Samara Golden: A Trap in Soft Division," 2016, at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery. Photography by TK.

The resultant rooms seem to speak in the aesthetics of urban living, of existing carefully on the surface of a space without putting down roots. But they also engage in the wider phenomenon of standardized form: you sit, alone, in an architecture shared by hundreds of others in the tens of blocks surrounding your own. You start at the noise of your alarm, only to relax apprehensively with the realization that the sound has emanated through your floor from the apartment below. The objects that occupy these in-between spaces are as signs that become representative of their makers, expressions of identity as subtle (or as blatant) as laptop-stickers. These are the materialized inscriptions that allow us to lay claim to mass-produced forms. The discomfort of Golden's show is in the recognition of how uneasily and superficially these

assertions of individuality lie.

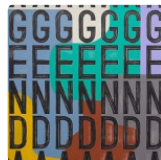
"A Trap in Soft Division" speaks to cultural standardization that begins in tract housing and apartment blocks and proceeds into the minutiae of our lives, from our electronics to the shirts that we wear. Peering over the barrier into the magic mirror, we are bestowed with an omniscient understanding of the ubiquitous forms that rule our world; the computer built into this upside-down installation could very well be the tiny laptop into which I am now typing these very words. The exhibition's title speaks to this sense of complacent, comfortable limitation. It's a trap because we are not truly given a choice, yet it is not so restrictive as to force a change.

Golden sees her own work as a solution to the problem that it proposes, which "effectively breaks through the solitude it is meant to depict, fleetingly carving out a space that brings visitors together through a joint experience." While persuaded by the alienation that the artist has captured so thoroughly in her representation of contemporary existence, I remain unconvinced by the community that I am meant to have joined; rather than inspiring a lonely companionship, "A Trap In Soft Division" heightens my sense of distance from those strangers whose curious eyes I avoid in the cold surface of the mirror.



Installation view of "Samara Golden: A Trap in Soft Division," 2016, at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Courtesy the artist and Night Gallery. Photography by TK.

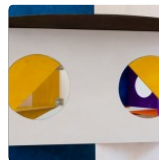
More from artcritical



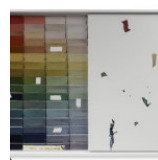
[Black Flag: CAPITAL at Minnesota Street Project](#)



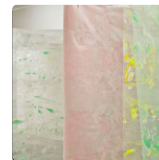
[Dallas in Wonderland: Chuck and George at CentralTrak](#)



[The Common Methods of Commonwealths: An Exhibition by Alice Könitz](#)



[Sculpture and Painting on the Line: Analia Saban at Sprüth Magers](#)



[Absolutely Curtains: Karla Black's Diaphanous Walls at Modern Art](#)



[print](#)

CLICK [HERE](#) TO ORDER SOKO'S NEW **SEXTAGRAM ZINE**, OUT NOW!!



AUTRE

DAILY JOURNAL
MUSIC

ART
PROSE

FASHION
MORE

SAMARA GOLDEN "A TRAP IN SOFT DIVISION" @ THE YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS IN SAN FRANCISCO

March 28, 2016

CATEGORIES:
ART / CULTURE / MUSIC / FILM
SEX / DESIGN / FASHION



Olivier Zahm With His Copy of Soko's SEXTAGRAM Zine

9 HOURS AGO



YBCA presents a brand new commission by Los Angeles

based artist Samara Golden. Known for creating dreamlike, uncanny, and immersive environments, Golden attempts to stage the sixth dimension—a place where the future, present, and past exist simultaneously. Golden’s installations use mirrors, video, sound, and handmade sculptures to create a hypnotic, hallucinatory space that draws the viewer in completely. This exhibition is Golden’s largest installation to date and will take over a substantial gallery at YBCA. ***A Trap In Soft Division*** will be on view until May 16, 2016 at YBCA in San Francisco. Photographs by Bradley Golden.



Satan Ceramics Zine Tenderloin Edition Published by Ever Gold Projects

9 HOURS AGO

In Art

Share

0 Likes

← Calamity Serenity: Meet Preston Douglas, The Hypebeast Who Started His Own Fashion Label → A Trip To Negril, Jamaica



Check Out Preston Douglas' Calamity Serenity Collection In This Lo Fi Motel Shoot

9 HOURS AGO

Comments (0)

Newest First Subscribe via e-mail



Subscribe

Sign up with your email address to receive news and updates.

Preview
POST COMMENT...

See the Most Disorienting Images in Samara Golden's Latest Exhibition

Alyssa Buffenstein, Wednesday, March 16, 2016

SHARE ▾



Samara Golden, *A Fall of Corners*, (2015). Installation view at CANADA New York. Photo: Philip Grauer. Courtesy of CANADA New York.

Artists have the ability to transform spaces in unforeseen ways, which is a particular talent of Los Angeles-based visionary [Samara Golden](#). In her work, art creates a place where past, present, and future exist simultaneously. Her latest installation, "A Trap in Soft Division," is currently on view at [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts](#) in San Francisco.

The exhibition, curated by Ceci Moss, is a topsy-turvy space filled with illusions, which makes for some seriously bewildering photos that have been circulating on social media. Don't even bother trying to understand the artist's largest installation to date using logic—just enter Golden's new version of reality, which she explored in mind-expanding previous exhibitions such as "[The Flat Side of the Knife](#)" at MoMA PS1, as well as in "[A Fall of Corners](#)" at Canada Gallery in New York.

These mirrored spaces are "layers of consciousness," [the artist states](#); if you gaze long into an abyss, you will gaze back onto you(rself). Scroll down for images.

Most Popular



ART WORLD

Hauser, Wirth and Schimmel Is a Gallery Built Like a Museum—What's Really G...



PEOPLE

Goethe-Institut Director Henrike Grohs Killed in Terrorist Attack



ART WORLD

Francis Bacon Paintings Worth \$33 Million Stolen From Madrid Home



ART WORLD

The Best and Worst of the Art World This Week in One Minute



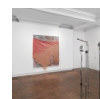
PEOPLE

Who Said This: Ai Weiwei Or Andy Warhol?



ART WORLD


Pierre Bergé-YSL Foundation Dazzles with Exhibition of Nouredine Amir's We...



ART WORLD

11 Things You Should Know about David Hammons Ahead of His Mnuchin Gallery ...

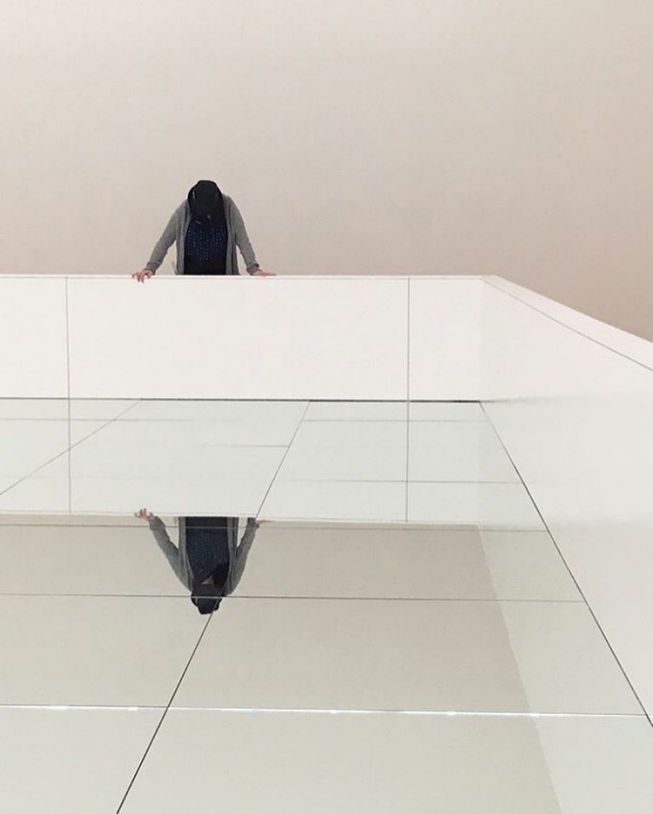
ybca • 1 week ago + Follow



When the mirrors are installed #SamaraGolden's details become disorienting in their precision. –Ben, videographer

58 likes 1 comment Instagram

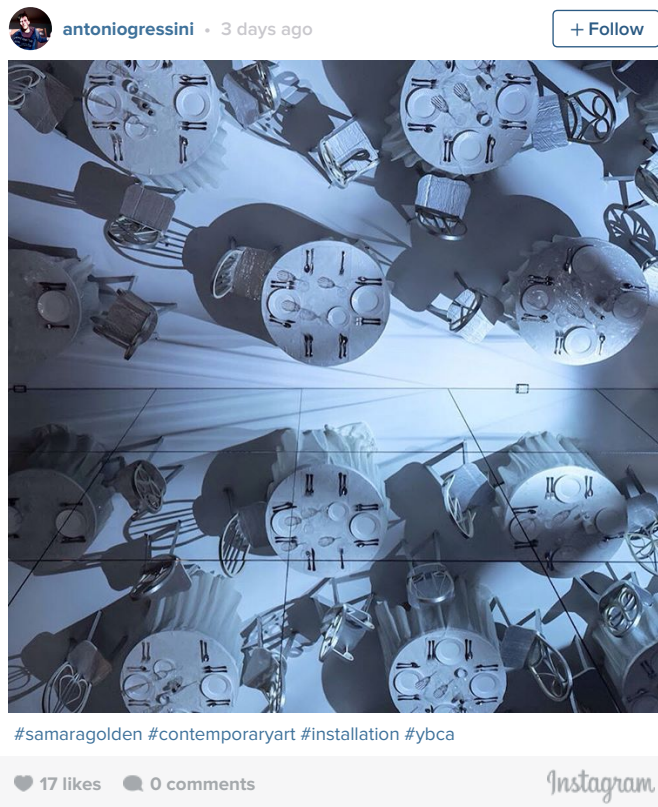
centaschumacher • 3 days ago + Follow



@evethorne looking into Samara Golden's A Trap in Soft Division (amazing, amazing piece)

3 likes 0 comments Instagram

<https://instagram.com/p/BC1qKXSIs1Q/>



At the opening party on Friday, an exhibition happening in tandem, titled "Take This Hammer: Art + Media Activism from the Bay Area" featured "Trump-tillas" by the Great Tortilla Conspiracy, which screen-printed images onto the thin flatbread.

Follow [artnet News](#) on Facebook.

Among the other artists represented in the gift are Cy Twombly, Philip Guston, Paul Thek, Eva Hesse and Albert Pinkham Ryder.

Mr. Dietrich was, in particular, a great fan of Thomas Eakins; thus his contribution features 12 works by that artist — 10 paintings and two drawings. Among them are oil sketches that relate closely to major works in the museum's already significant Eakins collection.

The bequest includes archival Eakins material — photographs, pencil studies, his palette and brushes — and platinum print portraits of Walt Whitman that relate to an oil painting of that poet and the frontispiece of the complete edition of his “Leaves of Grass.”

In addition, Mr. Dietrich donated \$10 million for an endowment to support the museum's work in contemporary art.

“It's a real game changer,” Mr. Rub said. “All sorts of new things become possible as a consequence of an endowment like this.”

Evolving Rooms

Upon receiving a commission to do an installation for the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, Samara Golden imagined a series of simple rooms containing little except laptops and neatly folded towels, evoking monotony and isolation.

“Like a nightmare of having everyone in their own rooms with no entrance or exit, living a disconnected life — despite being connected via the Internet,” Ms. Golden said. “Then I just always need to change things and make it feel more complicated.”

It was the gallery space itself that inspired her to rethink her approach: 18 ceiling vaults with skylights.

“It almost looks like a cathedral; the light is really beautiful,” she said.

“I’ve just never been able to work in a space like this before.”

So instead, Ms. Golden has created a room in each vault — “18 different ways of being and thinking,” she said — made up of three types. The plain, hotel-like rooms with laptops are lit with cold LED bulbs; the rooms with curtains are warmer, with coffee tables full of leftover drinks and desserts.

The rooms with stained-glass windows are cozy and cluttered, with crocheted blankets thrown over the sofas, spilled drinks on the coffee table, piles of clothes on the floor and laundry baskets full of socks. “It’s really messy in there,” Ms. Golden said.

Kirchner as Draftsman

When Galerie St. Etienne opens its booth at the Art Dealers Association of America’s art show, which runs Wednesday through March 6 at the Park Avenue Armory, it will feature watercolors, pastels and drawings by the German Expressionist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

The works belonged to the financier Robert Lehman, who died in 1969, and are among the few in his extensive collection that were not acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (although they were, until recently, on extended loan to the museum).

Mr. Lehman’s family is now selling 30 pieces, which focus on Kirchner’s development as a draftsman from 1905 through his Swiss exile in the 1920s. Mr. Lehman purchased the works as a group in 1959 from a German dealer, who obtained them from the artist’s estate.

“Drawings were the essence of his life,” said Jane Kallir, a director of the gallery. “And the sketches are the essence of his drawings.”

Galerie St. Etienne will show all 30 works, along with several Kirchner original lithographs and other drawings, in an exhibition opening on March



INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

PICKS

A SELECTION OF OPENINGS, SAN FRANCISCO

SFAQ — MARCH 10, 2016

SHARE ON:     



📷 Matt Heckert, Mojave Desert, 1983. Courtesy of the artist and the CCA Wattis Institute. Heckert is included in the upcoming exhibition *Void California: 1975-1989*, opening March 11 at the CCA Wattis Institute with a reception from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.



Ana Teresa Fernández

Erasure

Gallery Wendi Norris

161 Jessie Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

March 10 – April 16, 2016



Luke Butler, *The End XX*, 2015. Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 30 inches. Courtesy of Jessica Silverman Gallery.

Luke Butler
Afterimage
Jessica Silverman Gallery
488 Ellis Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
March 10 – April 16, 2016

Reception: March 10, 6-8 pm



Robert Adams, *Astoria, Oregon*, 2015. Courtesy of Fraenkel Gallery.

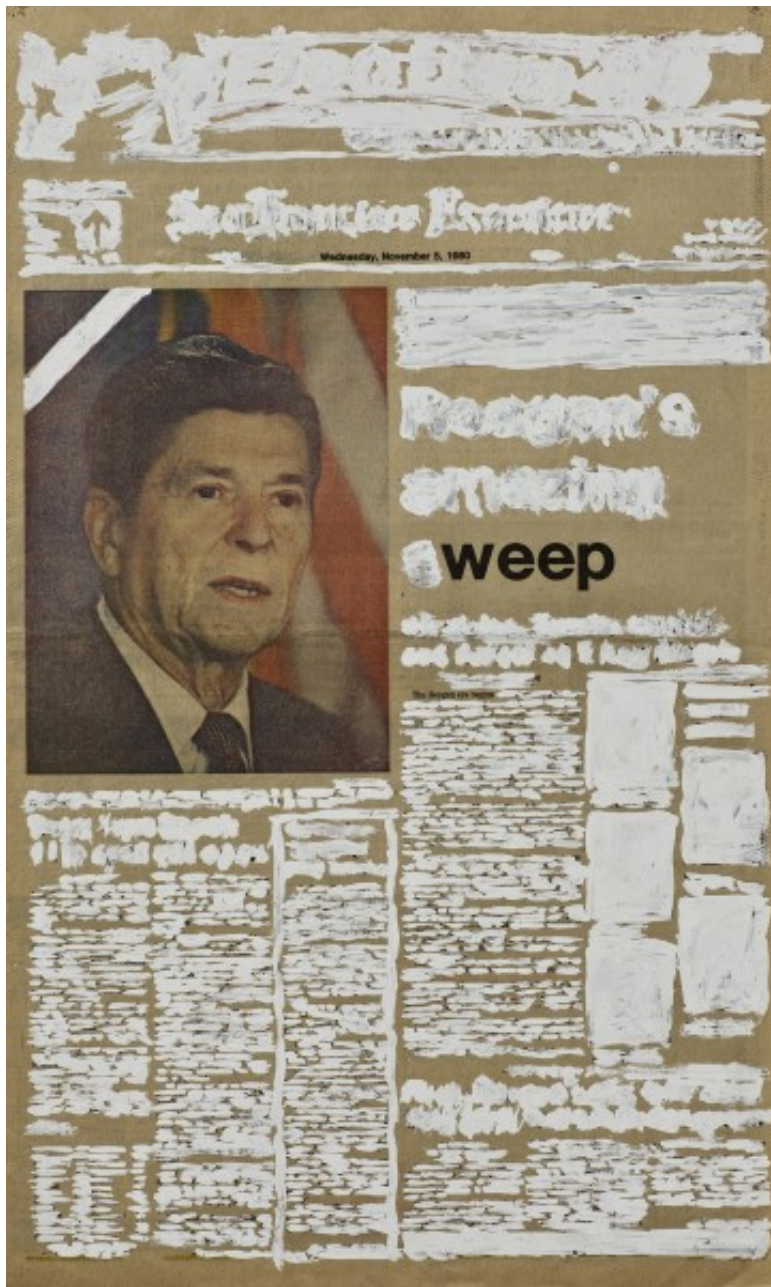
Robert Adams

Around the House & Other New Work

Fraenkel Gallery

49 Geary Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94108

March 10 – April 23, 2016



Randy Hussong. Untitled, 1980. Photograph by Nagasawa. Courtesy of the artist and the CCA Wattis Institute.

Melody Sumner Carnahan, Randy Hussong, Cameron Jamie, Negativland, NOMAG, Raymond Pettibon, Ruby Ray, Search & Destroy, Greta Snider, Matt Heckert of Survival Research Laboratories, Joe Rees/TargetVideo77, Vile, and We Got Power

Void California: 1975-1989

CCA Wattis Institute

Kent and Vicki Logan Galleries

360 Kansas Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

March 11 – April 9, 2016

Reception: March 11, 6:30-8:30 pm



Installation view, *A Fall of Corners*, Samara Golden at CANADA, New York, 2015. Courtesy of the artist and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

Samara Golden

A Trap in Soft Division

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

701 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

March 11 – May 29, 2016

Reception: March 11, 7-10 pm



PERSIA featuring Daddie\$ Pla\$tik, *Google Google Apps Apps*, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, Bay Area Society for Art & Activism, Cat Brooks with Black Lives Matter | Anti Police-Terror Project, CultureStrike, Pitch Interactive, Tucker Nichols, Favianna Rodriguez, Stamen, and others
Take This Hammer: Art + Media Activism from the Bay Area

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

701 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

March 11 – August 14, 2016

Reception: March 11, 7-10 pm



Robert Arneson

Guardians of the Secret II

Brian Gross Fine Art

248 Utah Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

March 12 – May 7, 2016

Reception: March 12, 4–6 pm



Serge Attukwei Clottey, *American Lottery*, 2015. Plastic, wire and oil paint, 51 x 94 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Ever Gold [Projects].

Serge Attukwei Clottey

Hand to Mouth

Ever Gold [Projects]

1275 Minnesota Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

March 18 – April 30, 2016

Reception: March 18, 6–9:30 pm



Enrique Chagoya, *The Enlightened Savage's Guide to Economic Theory* (detail – page 7), 2010. Acrylic and water based oils, decals, and transfers on Amate paper, 12 x 105 inches. Courtesy of Anglim Gilbert Gallery.

Enrique Chagoya: Mindful Savage's Guide to Modernism

Anglim Gilbert Gallery

1275 Minnesota Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

March 18 – May 14, 2016



Felix Gonzalez-Torres, “Untitled” (Portrait of Dad), 1991. Courtesy of the Carlos and Rosa de la Cruz Collection, Miami and Ratio 3.

Miriam Böhm, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Sol LeWitt, Mitzi Pederson, and Fred Sandback

Vanishing Point

Ratio 3

2831A Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

March 19 – April 30, 2016

Reception: March 19, 6–9 pm

[VISUAL ARTS \(HTTP://WWW2.KQED.ORG/ARTS/CATEGORY/VISUALARTS/\)](http://www2.kqed.org/arts/category/visualarts/)

Artful Dodger: March Into March's Visual Art Happenings



Samara Golden, 'A Fall of Corners,' 2015. Installation view at CANADA New York. (Courtesy YBCA)

By **Sarah Hotchkiss** (<http://www2.kqed.org/arts/author/shotchkiss/>) [🐦 \(http://twitter.com/sahotchkiss\)](http://twitter.com/sahotchkiss)

MARCH 1, 2016

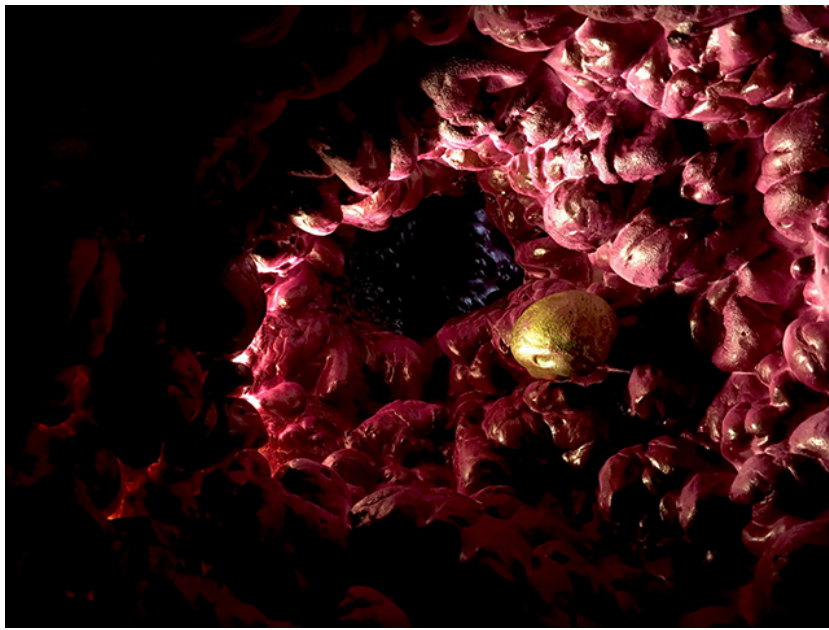


SHARE

March has an urgency about it — likely due to the month's name doubling as an imperative to walk determinedly. And so I urge you to move yourself, by whatever means of locomotion you prefer, to as many art events you can this month.

But where to start? The event everyone's going to be talking about is the grand opening of [Minnesota Street Project](http://minnesotastreetproject.com/) (<http://minnesotastreetproject.com/>) on March 18, the Dogpatch neighborhood arts complex backed by Deborah and Andy Rappaport. Boasting 11 gallery spaces, approximately 30 studios, art storage services and more, the ambitious development is sure to put on one heck of an inaugural party — stay tuned for an official report on all the galleries' first exhibitions in the weeks to come.

And here are five more suggestions, just for fun.



Detail of Mike Rothfeld sculpture. (Courtesy Alter Space)

Katelyn Eichwald & Peter Shear; Mike Rothfeld, *In the Region of the Disprovable*

Alter Space, San Francisco

March 5 – April 16, 2016

In Alter Space’s main galleries, out-of-towners [Katelyn Eichwald and Peter Shear](http://alterspace.co/exhibitions/katelyn-eichwald-peter-shear/) present a self-titled exhibition of paintings. Eichwald’s canvasses are full of crudely rendered figures — women reclining, reading, smoking in tubs. Shear’s brightly colored abstract works are a veritable smorgasbord of small-scale abstraction — each utilizing a different method, palette and pattern. But the cherry topper on this exhibition cycle is a new work by [Mike Rothfeld](http://alterspace.co/exhibitions/mike-rothfeld/) in the Peephole Gallery. With lo-fi materials, Rothfeld crafts sometimes ominous, often hilarious sci-fi scenarios, sparking the viewer’s creative thinking as they parse out a narrative from the gooey, glowing or alien objects at hand.



Luke Butler, 'Portrait of the Artist,' 2015. (Courtesy Jessica Silverman Gallery)

Luke Butler, *Afterimage*

Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco

March 10 – April 16, 2016

Speaking of science fiction, it’s been four years since [Luke Butler](http://jessicasilvermangallery.com/exhibitions/7251/)’s last media-inspired exhibition at Jessica Silverman. His new body of work includes a continuation of his “The End” paintings, canvases that appear to be stills of movie end credits, all produced by “L BUTLER PICTURES.” The self-portraiture becomes figurative in a series of

paintings depicting the artist himself prone on the ground, surrounded by painting supplies. Explicitly or indirectly depicting his own tragicomic death, Butler's delicately crafted memento mori invite close looking and plenty of dry chuckles.



Samara Golden, 'A Fall of Corners,' 2015. Installation view at CANADA New York. (Courtesy YBCA)

Samara Golden, *A Trap in Soft Division*

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco
March 11 – May 29, 2016

My first introduction to Los Angeles-based [Samara Golden](http://ybca.org/samara-golden) (<http://ybca.org/samara-golden>)'s work was a hallucinatory installation at LA's [Night Gallery](http://nightgallery.ca/event.php?id=91) (<http://nightgallery.ca/event.php?id=91>), where she fabricated — with little more than lighting, foam board and fabric — scenes of an endlessly reflecting night club, an eerily abandoned car crash and a kitchen filled with the creepiest cat-shaped cushions imaginable. Golden's new commission for YBCA is her largest installation to date; look forward to entering an artwork that will likely fill you with dread — but in the best way possible.



Negativland, Poster Map from 'A Big 10-8 Place,' 1983. (Courtesy of the artist)

Void California: 1975 – 1989

CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco
March 11 – April 9, 2016

CCA's graduating curatorial practice students bring together a [deeply researched exhibition](http://www.wattis.org/view?id=4,305) (<http://www.wattis.org/view?id=4,305>) of artwork, ephemera, video and sound from California's punk heyday. Positioning itself against Hot Topic-esque nostalgia, the exhibition dives into the ways in which artists and collectives like Raymond Pettibon, Melody Sumner Carnahan, Negativland and We Got Power used portable recording equipment and cheap, easily reproducible media to document and spread an alternative narrative to the mainstream (and increasingly conservative) culture. A series of events may prove the punk spirit lives on, starting with opening night performance by Brontez Purnell.



Carrie Hott, Project Space installation at Headlands, Summer 2014. (Courtesy Headlands Center for the Arts)

Carrie Hott, Key Room

Headlands Center for the Arts, Marin Headlands
Opens March 20, 12-5pm

The latest in an illustrious series of permanent artist commissions at the Headlands, *The Key Room* (<http://www.headlands.org/the-key-room/>) is both an installation and visitor resource center. Two years in the making, Oakland-based artist Carrie Hott's project touches on the Headlands' long and complicated history (from dairy farming to missile base to arts center) through archival materials, archeological displays, Hott's own artworks and a bank of phones playing local sounds, interviews and testimonials. With a talent for connecting disparate subjects (whaling, oil lamps and black out curtains, to name a few) in visually arresting ways, this "unlocking" will be well worth the trip via tunnel or scenic coastal route.

EXPLORE: [VISUAL ARTS \(HTTP://WW2.KQED.ORG/ARTS/CATEGORY/VISUALARTS/\)](http://ww2.kqed.org/arts/category/visualarts/), [GUIDE \(HTTP://WW2.KQED.ORG/ARTS/TAG/GUIDE/\)](http://ww2.kqed.org/arts/tag/guide/)

