

## Sadamasa Motonaga

Fergus McCaffrey // November 6, 2015–January 30, 2016

A member of the Japanese Gutai group, Motonaga also made a large body of work utilizing airbrush techniques. These are the focus of this survey, which should be required viewing for a younger generation of artists—Josh Reames and Austin Lee come to mind—who will likely connect with the late artist's quirky vision. Included in the show are 16 paintings from a 1970s children's book, *Moko Moko Moko*, as well as larger canvases that depict alien landscapes and fleshy shapes, busily contorting upon themselves.



*Moko Moko Moko*, 1976.

## Jeff Williams

Jack Hanley Gallery // November 22–December 20, 2015



Installation view of "Jeff Williams," 2015.

This series of distinct sculptures by Williams, who's based in both New York and Austin, seem somehow keyed into each other, like a ramshackle Rube

Goldberg contraption threading through the space. Natural materials appear synthetic, and vice versa, as with a mass of extruded thermal plastic that resembles a skull or shell, and hunks of "central Texas fossil" that might have been hewn by the artist, rather than by the passage of time.

## Daniel Hesidence

Canada // November 7, 2015–January 6, 2016

Viewers would be crazy not to sidle up to Hesidence's works until they're close enough to breathe in the residual oil stink, close enough



*Untitled (Summers Gun)*, 2015.

to lick the furry, splotchy surfaces. The effect is both gloriously messy and masterfully controlled—as if a bunch of well-trained birds had ingested brilliant pigments and decided to shit balletically all over the surface. From a distance, the paintings in "Summers Gun" look like images of crop circles, or the sort of GPS maps that runners or bikers make to chart their progress over a landscape; caulklake white lines cut arcane routes through expanses of sensual, purple-yellow-green prettiness.

## "Not a Photo"

The Hole // November 29, 2015–January 16, 2016

Kathy Grayson's knack for deftly curated thematic shows continues with this survey. Rachel de Joode's photographic cutouts, perched on stools, resemble scans of gelato carved into wavelike shapes. Colored-pencil maestro Eric Yahnker has a large, quasi-photorealist drawing of a man attempting to have his cigarette lit with an iPhone app. Mark Flood contributes a triptych of text and images sourced from the Internet that is genuinely discomfiting, mixing the hermetic speech of the art world with images of horrifying violence, as well as that of a man pissing into a coffeepot. And some mimes loading a baguette into a cannon.



Eric Yahnker, *iFire*, 2015.

## Cynthia Daignault

Lisa Cooley // November 1, 2015–January 10, 2016

Gleefully romantic, Daignault's show—which includes 360 small-scale paintings—is one of the most uplifting things we've seen in ages. Working against masculine road narratives, the artist set out on a cross-country drive, creating these tiny canvases along the way. They're hung with the horizon lines mostly connecting from one painting to the next. The last canvas in the line, a homecoming, captures the Manhattan skyline. The mood is celebratory and smart; this



Detail of *Light Atlas*, 2015.

is a conceptual painting project that's also about craft. It's enough to make you want to skip town yourself and just drive.

## Sara Ludy

Bitforms // January 7–February 7, 2016

For her first solo with Bitforms, Ludy draws from a personal archive of images collected from the Internet over the past 15-plus years, mixing arrangements of these found photographs with digital paintings. She incorporates the principles of feng shui as well, treating the amorphous virtual as a space to be organized and experienced with attention to physical reality. In the gallery, tangible traces of personal experience are erased in favor of a slick, detached aesthetic.



*Embrace*, 2015.

## Ruby Sky Stiler

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery // November 22–December 20, 2015

Pairing elegant drawing-in-space sculptural frames (depicting the basic outlines of heads and bodies) with layered paintings of foam, acrylic resin, and thermal adhesive, Stiler cultivates a sense of strange artifacts uncovered. The latter are jumbled puzzles composed of faux-ancient architectural shards; occasionally the patterns coalesce into recognizable subjects, as Stiler flirts with the bare minimum of what can constitute a figure.



Installation view of "Figures, Fragments, and Open Form," 2015.

## Keith Mayerson

Marlborough Chelsea // October 30–December 23, 2015



*New Year's Eve Empire*, 2014.

"My American Dream" resembles Jim Shaw's "Thrift Store Paintings" project, but while Shaw bought his kitsch, Mayerson has made his own, canvas by canvas. The source imagery is all over the place, but the works share enough of a palette to make them sing in the

same register. After a few minutes beneath the weight of all these competing images, something close to raw admiration crept through for this seriously obsessive, borderline mad project. A depiction of Captain Marvel hangs next to a just-off-enough-to-be-weird portrait of Barack Obama, and there are two paintings of Kermit the Frog riding a bicycle—resulting in a strange leveling effect between disparate images.

## Jane Corrigan

Feuer/Mesler // January 9–February 14, 2016

These breezy, charming paintings, rendered with loose brushwork and dynamic smears of oil, offer windows into the fairy tale lives of adventurous young women. Set in a series of anonymous rural interiors and landscapes, Corrigan's heroines sneak out at night or parse secret messages; the scenes are punctuated with details by turns sweet (a mother braiding her daughter's hair at breakfast) and sinister (a demon hiding behind a door, a skull atop a fence post).



*Walk (evening)*, 2015.

LEFT TO RIGHT: TOP TO BOTTOM: THE ESTATE OF SADAMASA MOTONAGA AND FERGUS MCCAFFREY; BRAD FARWELL, JEFF WILLIAMS, AND JACK HANLEY GALLERY; JASON MANDELLA AND CANADA; THE HOLE; CYNTHIA DAIGNAULT AND LISA COOLEY; JOHN BERENS AND BITFORMS; NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY; TOM POWELL IMAGING, AND MARLBOROUGH CHELSEA; JANE CORRIGAN AND FEUER/MESLER

LONDON

# Jim Shaw

Simon Lee // November 19, 2015–January 8, 2016



The Angel of the chemical plant, 2015

Shaw's own paintings are almost as bizarre as the thrift-store canvases he notoriously collects and curates, mixing together various vernacular styles, from religious iconography to comic book superheroes to advertising imagery. Painted against found theatrical backdrops from the 1940s and '50s, the sense is of American culture and history as a sort of macabre, hysterical masquerade, a performance of demented excess. The specific references—to historical episodes or Shaw's own childhood—may occasionally be a little obscure, but the overall effect is quite captivating. —GABRIEL COXHEAD

# Ellen Hyllemose

Fold // November 21, 2015–January 16, 2016

The title of Hyllemose's show—"Landscape Reconfigured"—may be a tad pretentious and over-reaching, but the works themselves are brashly alluring. The central idea is the contrast between natural, organic forms and ersatz or artificial materials: a suspended array of hillock-edged MDF panels swaddled in acid-lemon nylon; more nylon, paler and semitranslucent, wrapped around bulging, boulderlike stacks of concrete; ragged, dangling ribbons of paper dipped in bright acrylic paint. They're simple pieces, but very effective at creating an atmosphere of slightly sinister sickness. —GC



Glue Between Landscapes, 2015.

# Pamela Golden

Marlborough Contemporary // November 11, 2015–January 9, 2016



Shoe fly, dragon fly, get back to your mother, 2015.

There are two sources for Golden's large watercolor-and-ink works: schlocky sci-fi illustrations of prehistoric worlds and photographs of off-duty American soldiers surfing during the Vietnam War. The resulting mashups, featuring longboarders frolicking in lagoons also hosting dinosaurs, are strangely, powerfully evocative. With their bleached or saturated colors, and their gauzy, almost filmic quality, they suggest a kind of dreamlike yearning for lost innocence, a fantasy of prelapsarian grace. —GC

HOUSTON

# Peat Duggins

Art Palace // October 29–December 19, 2015



Coyote and Pups, 2015.

Boston-based Duggins draws viewers into the grotesqueries of the natural world to interrupt American mythologies—for example, a resin-cast coyote who births an endless litter of pups that squirm in the slime of afterbirth. Taking his cues from a 1977 Charles Bronson film, he conflates the elusive whale from *Moby Dick* with the white buffalo of Native American legend. A chandelier of cast and sculpted horns and a buffalo head flocked in white fur and mounted in a charred wood frame are death scenes that complete the life cycle begun by the coyote. Dürer's hare, mounted from behind by a male of the species, watches mid-coitus from a drawing. —RISA PULEO

# Leon Ferrari

Sicardi Gallery // October 13–December 19, 2015

Scrawled letterlike arabesques accumulate into a dense thicket of markings that speak to language's failure to adequately describe experiences of trauma. Legible texts articulate poignancy when words connect as symbols to their counterparts in reality. Sculptures consisting of tenuous networks of wire translate the graphic nature of the drawings into three dimensions, while a selection of work that pairs Catholic objects with images of global warfare offer a glimpse of the artist's rarely seen representational work. —RP



Untitled, 2001.

# Pat Steir

Texas Gallery // October 29–December 12, 2015



Green, Orange, and Mica, 2015.

In each of Steir's canvases, "zips" down the center nod to Barnett Newman, offsetting and separating two fields of color in subtle dialogues that rival those of Josef Albers. Paint stains, bleeds, saturates, and drips onto the underlying canvas, animated by viscosity and fluidity in this study of painting-as-verb. Inflected by the light, surfaces glow with iridescence and hum in different lusters of matte finish. Scaled to the height of the gallery, the monumental canvases transform the space into a painted room. —RP

LOS ANGELES

# Whitney Bedford

Susanne Vielmetter // December 12, 2015–January 23, 2016

In small panel landscapes, Bedford explores the borderlands between abstraction and figuration. In *Forever August, 2015*, cacti are rendered with a naturalist's eye in black ink on the painting's dusty-pink ground; gestural brushstrokes of mossy greens, creams, mustard, hot pink, and browns mimic the vegetal shapes beside them. These studies are synthesized and streamlined into much larger works, such as *Tender is the Late Night, 2015*, where the vegetative patterns blossom in elegant gold on flat backgrounds.

—GRANT JOHNSON



The Dirty Campfire, 2015.

# "The Avant-Garde Won't Give Up: Cobra and Its Legacy"

Blum & Poe // November 5–December 23, 2015



Julian Schnabel, Veramente Bestia V (Girl with No Eyes), 1988.

The second installment of this exhibition extends the domain of Cobra, a lesser-known postwar avant-garde, into the present. Works by founding figures like Asger Jorn are smartly paired and well matched with later entries, such as Julian Schnabel's *Veramente Bestia V (Girl with No Eyes)*, 1988, or Mark Grotjahn's *Untitled (Cloud and Pond William Mask M38.b)*, 2015. In this blender of history, is it gauche to ponder who was ahead of his time and who, behind? —GJ

# Michel Majerus

Matthew Marks Gallery // November 21, 2015–January 9, 2016

In *Overdose, 1997* (this show's largest work, which spans an entire gallery wall), the cowboy doll Woody from *Toy Story* raises a hand to his tired brow, as if to comfort his troubled mind. Behind his back, other paper scraps hover in the picture plane: graphics advertising laundry detergent, nightclubs, and ice cream sandwiches are blown up and painted in super-size. This 15-panel work, an image made of visual fragments, aptly summarizes the pleasure and puzzle of Majerus's post-Pop work. His intense, colorful, and gregarious appropriations remain incomplete; they keep looking like just a partial view. —GJ



Overdose, 1997.