

galerie laurent godin

Scoli ACOSTA

Press review



ALURING*

T H E A R T S C E N E

EXPOSITIONS BUREAU

ORPHEUS HOT / ORPHEUS COLD

SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

A la galerie Laurent GODIN au 36 bis, rue Eugène Oudiné 75013 Paris /// Jusqu'au 19 octobre 2019 /// Exposition : ORPHEUS HOT / ORPHEUS COLD

"Initialement, je souhaitais que ces peintures de suie et de feuilles soient de petits poèmes, mais elles sont devenues picturales également..." explique-t-il à la façon d'un conteur. Son oeuvre composite s'appuie sur une iconographie reposant sur la transformation d'objets du quotidien et nous parle en filigrane de l'histoire du territoire américain et de ses contradictions. Inscrit dans un "cycle biologique", sa démarche artistique nous parle d'une "esthétique des ressources" dans laquelle chaque oeuvre appelle la suivante. Sa poésie de l'ordinaire donne à son travail la structure d'un récit onirique. En effet, Scolli Acosta (Photo ci-dessous Crédit: Céline Bertin) crée des correspondances improbables mettant en lumière le caractère interdépendant des situations. Le visiteur appréciera ici le mobile "Night" qui a été réalisé à partir d'images agrandies de skateboarders en plein vol. Mais aussi ces nombreuses dichotomies traversant cette superbe exposition dans laquelle apparaît "Hearth Spring" : une boîte dorée hérissée de pailles et de filtres de cigarettes... Synthétisant - à côté de ce masque mortuaire du 19ème "L'inconnue de la Seine" vu comme le substitut d'Eurydice - les éléments du feu et de l'eau.

www.laurentgodin.com

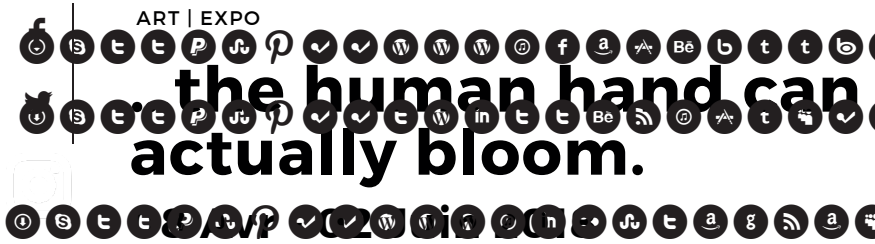


Sète-Los Angeles, où la créativité en partage

- ✍ La Rédaction
- 🕒 17 septembre 2019
- 📌 Pluridisciplinaire



« Deux collines, l'une au bord de la Méditerranée, l'autre du Pacifique. Deux scènes artistiques vibrantes, à ciel ouvert, où l'on retrouve lumière, espace, énergie mais aussi un certain goût pour l'insolite, l'irrévérence et le mélange des genres. Depuis Agnès Varda qui partit en 1980 filmer les peintures murales de Los Angeles jusqu'à la collaboration récente de Lucas Mancione et Scolli Acosta en passant par les affinités d'Hervé Di Rosa et Robert Combas avec les artistes et musiciens punk de la côte Ouest, une histoire secrète relie les deux villes de Sète et Los Angeles. Celle d'une certaine contre-culture, en marge des écoles de Paris et New-York. » Tel est le constat de l'association Sète-Los Angeles, créée par la libraire Sophie Dulin, le commissaire d'exposition Yann Perreau, la paysagiste et ingénieure Pauline Boyé, l'historienne de l'art Marie Taillan et la styliste Anne Boyé, qui entendent mettre en exergue la vitalité des scènes artistiques des deux villes et révéler les synergies existantes comme en favoriser de nouvelles. Ce par le biais d'un double événement se déployant, pour son édition inaugurale, d'abord à Sète, à compter du mercredi 18 et jusqu'au dimanche 22 septembre, puis à Los Angeles, du 6 au 10 novembre, lors duquel 14 artistes sétois, où ayant noué une relation particulière à la ville – Aldo Bascamano, Patricia Bascamano, Stéphan Bascamano, Armelle Caron, André Cervera, Robert Combas, Christophe Cosentino, Jean Denant, Hervé Di Rosa, Marc Duran, Lucas Mancione, Jean-Marie Picard, Topolino, Agnès Varda (1928-2019) – et autant de créateurs angeleños – Scolli Acosta, Vanessa Atlan, Barbara Carrasco, Percival Everett, Francesca Gabbiani, Kim Gordon, Alex Israël & Bret Easton Ellis, Patrick Jackson, Poe, Eddie Ruscha, Jim Shaw, Marnie Weber, Joséphine Wister Faure – sont invités à dialoguer dans diverses disciplines telles que les arts plastiques, la musique, la littérature ou encore le cinéma. Création d'œuvres in-situ, projections, happenings, conférences, performances, concerts, lectures et dégustations culinaires sont au programme des cinq jours de festivités sétoises dont le programme détaillé est à retrouver sur www.setelosangeles.com.
 Visuel : Affiche de la manifestation Sète-Los Angeles.



Vernissage le 08 Avr 2018



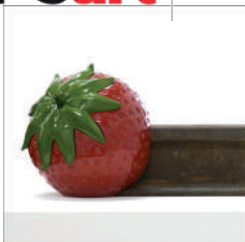
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SCOLI ACOSTA ([HTTPS://WWW.PARIS-ART.COM/CREATEURS/SCOLI-ACOSTA/](https://www.parisart.com/createurs/scoli-acosta/))

L'exposition « ...the human hand can actually bloom. » à la galerie parisienne Laurent Godin présente un nouveau projet de Scoli Acosta consacré à Monte Verità, lieu d'expérimentations utopiques et culturelles situé en Suisse. Sculptures, tableaux et objets font revivre l'esprit de ce vivier artistique.





L'exposition « ...the human hand can actually bloom. » à la galerie
L'urmat, Genève, en Suisse romande, nous propose le récit d'un lieu d'expérimentations utopiques que fut la colline de Monte Verità en Suisse.



« ...the human hand can actually bloom. » : l'esprit utopique de Monte Verità

Le nouveau projet de Scoli Acosta est consacré à Monte Verità, colline suisse où il séjourna en Août 2016. Située sur le territoire d'Ascona, dans le canton suisse du Tessin, cette colline devint à partir de la fin du XIXe siècle, le territoire d'implantation privilégié de communautés utopiques, d'expérimentation de nouveaux modes de vie et de nombreux événements culturels. Des personnalités telles que l'écrivain Herman Hesse, les peintres Wassily Kandinsky et Francis Picabia, les danseuses Isadora Duncan et Mary Wigman comptèrent parmi ses résidents.

Le titre de l'exposition, « ...the human hand can actually bloom. » (... la main humaine peut fleurir) reprend une phrase de Mary Wigman, symbolique de l'esprit de Monte Verità, auquel Scoli Acosta rend hommage à travers son projet célébrant la création artistique dans toute sa richesse et sa diversité. Pour cela, l'artiste a conçu un lieu évoquant un podium, garni de poufs et d'une petite table centrale, où peuvent se tenir des échanges et des performances.

Scoli Acosta fait offre un condensé de Monte Verità

Sur cette estrade est présenté un condensé de ce que représente Monte Verità, invitant à y faire l'expérience de l'essence de ce lieu particulier. On découvre ainsi des sculptures que Scoli Acosta a réalisées à partir d'éléments glanés au cours de marches autour du Monte Verità, tels que des sacs en papier ou des rails de chemin de fer, mais aussi des masques et des costumes créés en hommage à l'artiste dada puis surréaliste Sophie Taeuber-Arp et à l'écrivain dadaïste Hugo Ball qui furent également des résidents de Monte Verità, ou encore une vidéo d'un programme télévisé américain évoquant Hugo Ball et le mouvement Dada.

"Save The Drop" Campaign to Exhibit Water Conservation Art Installation in Union Station

Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles engages renowned artist Scoli Acosta to bring drought awareness message to commuters



To spread the word about its "Save the Drop" water conservation campaign, the Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles will partner with artist Scoli Acosta to display an art installation in Union Station from March 12 – 24. The sculptural piece will feature rain barrels and a cistern (a larger water storage container that can be installed underground), and will demonstrate how individuals and families can collect rainwater at their homes. Over the following months, the installation will travel to other iconic L.A. locations to amplify the Save the Drop message.

A Los Angeles native, Scoli Acosta is known for repurposing and reshaping found objects, ever drawn to humble materials and economic gestures in an organic and associative process. On his design for Save the Drop, Acosta said, "It's exciting to work with the city toward an awareness of working with the resources of the skies. Resourcefulness and the poetics of the everyday are important to me."

Since April 2015, the Save the Drop campaign inspired Angelenos citywide to save water and access existing tools and rebates. A joint program of the Mayor's Fund, the City of Los Angeles, and Los Angeles-based creative agency Omelet, Save the Drop is also a key component of Mayor Garcetti's signature Sustainable City pLAn. The Mayor's pLAn lays out ambitious targets for water conservation and increasing our local water supply that include reducing water use by 20% by 2017, and reducing our reliance on purchased imported water by 50% by 2025.



Working through mass media, social media, and on-the-ground community engagement, Save the Drop offers bilingual information on outdoor water use, drought-tolerant landscaping, indoor water reduction, and rainwater capture.

“The Save the Drop campaign has had a powerful effect on Angelenos’ response to our drought,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti. “Scoli Acosta’s art will help to further inspire us to conserve and illustrate the beauty in the resources we have at hand. I am proud to bring this talented Los Angeles artist to Union Station. ”

“Leveraging local creative resources to help Angelenos visualize how they can be part of the drought’s solution is a prime example of how the Mayor’s Fund for Los Angeles brings together public, private, and nonprofit resources to tackle critical city issues,” said Deidre Lind, President of the Fund. “For the thousands of commuters and tourists who pass through Union Station, Scoli Acosta’s dynamic and surprising installation may spark the kind of connection between beauty and conservation that will help Los Angeles adapt to a dry climate.”

And dry it is, even in this El Niño year. The statewide snowpack, the source of much of California’s water supply, is only 83 percent of the March 1 average, the result of moderate precipitation since last October and relatively warm temperatures.

The installation’s creation was supported by multiple partners connected to the Save the Drop campaign. Rain Barrels International donated the four rain barrels included in the installation. Hey! Tanks LA donated the 865-gallon cistern, offered expertise on rainwater capture, and provided a subsidized working space for the artist in their warehouse. Rain Gutters LA donated used gutters.

Acosta’s artwork highlights the central role L.A.’s thriving arts scene can play in environmental education. Born in 1973 and raised in East Los Angeles, where he currently lives, Acosta has exhibited his work throughout L.A., San Diego, New York, and France. An artist of many mediums, Acosta focuses his installations around the recombination and adaptation of “everyday” objects to articulate his creative vision. Acosta studied fine art at the Kansas City Art Institute and at Ultimate Akademie in Cologne, Germany and is represented by Galerie Laurent Godin in Paris. He is a recent recipient of the California

About the Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles

The Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to improving life for all Angelenos. Bringing together institutions and experts from across the City, the Fund supports programs that will create transformative change across Los Angeles, making it a world leader in economic prosperity, government efficiency, community resiliency, and quality of life for all of its residents. Uniquely positioned at the crossroads of local government, business, philanthropy, and non-profits, the Fund enables communication and collaboration that will tackle some of Los Angeles' most complex challenges. The Fund is supported by private donations and is overseen by an independent Board of Directors. More information can be found at www.mayorsfundla.org.

About Omelet

Omelet is a creative company that solves complex marketing problems for progressive partners, including AT&T, HBO, Microsoft, Ubisoft, and Walmart. The company also has divisions – including Omelet Studio and Omelet Brands – to create original brand programming and original owned intellectual property. <http://www.omeletla.com>

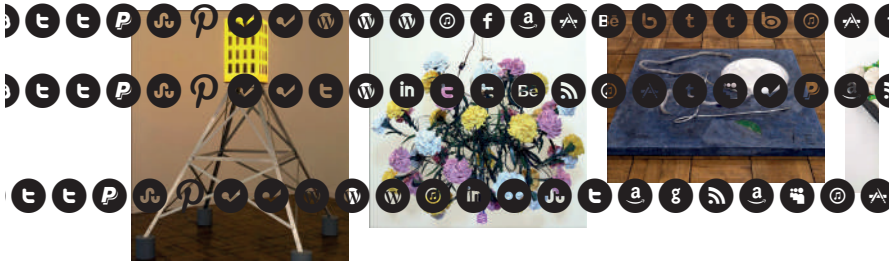
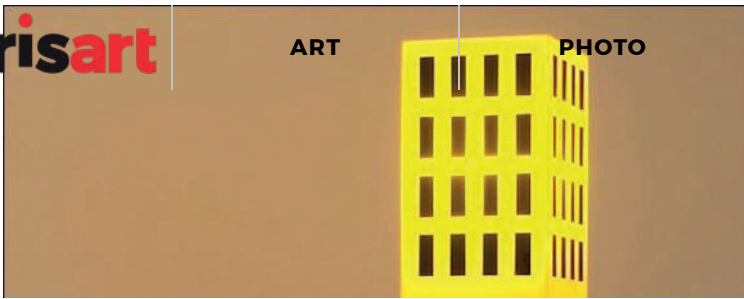
ART | EXPO

A decorative graphic consisting of three horizontal rows of circular icons representing various social media and sharing platforms. The icons include Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and others. The text 'Le jour du vin et des roses' is overlaid on this graphic.

Le jour du vin et des roses

Vernissage le 10 Sep 2016 à partir de 18:30

Des œuvres de Scoli Acosta, Ida Ekblad, Noël Dolla, Dominique Figarella et Piero Gilardi dialoguent dans l'exposition « Le jour du vin et des roses » aux Bains-Douches, à Alençon. Des peintures et sculptures qui partagent un même processus créatif fondé sur la récupération et le recyclage.



L'exposition « **Le jour du vin et des roses** » réunit aux Bains-Douches, à Alençon, des œuvres de Scolli Acosta, Ida Ekblad, Noël Dolla, Dominique Figarella et Piero Gilardi. Les peintures et sculptures ouvrent un dialogue entre création contemporaine et histoire de l'art.

Emprunts et récupération

Le titre de l'exposition, « **Le jour du vin et des roses** », est une référence multiple. Il renvoie autant au film du même nom de Blake Edwards, qu'à la chanson *A Rose Is Still A Rose d'Aretha Franklin*, à celle intitulée *Days Of Wine And Roses* de Frank Sinatra ou encore au premier album du groupe de rock alternatif californien The Dream Syndicate. Un faisceau d'emprunts à des productions représentatives de la culture populaire.

Ce titre porte en lui l'enjeu même de l'exposition : rassembler des artistes dont la démarche créative repose sur l'appropriation d'éléments préexistants, sur les emprunts, et la récupération. Le lustre *Carnation Chandelier* de Scolli Acosta, est semblable à un bouquet d'œillets multicolores suspendu dans l'air. Muni d'éléments de lampe, il produit une lumière rose visible entre les fleurs de papier. L'association des éléments floraux au dispositif électrique dépasse la dimension décorative pour renvoyer à d'évidentes préoccupations environnementales autour de la consommation d'énergie.

Des notions communes de recyclage et d'écologie

La sculpture *Spiaggia con Nautilus* de Piero Gilardi est un exemple des « tapis-nature » qui rendirent célèbre cet artiste emblématique du courant de l'Arte Povera. Reproduisant en mousse polyuréthane des éléments naturels (ici un bord de mer avec sable, coquillages, végétaux et galets), ces œuvres s'intéressent à l'introduction de la nature dans l'espace domestique et au rapport entre l'art et la vie. Les côtés tranchés nets des tapis nature renvoient également à la production industrielle, mettant en perspective nature et artifice.

Les créations partagent un même mode d'expression fondé sur le prélèvement puis l'association libre de matériaux. Ainsi l'œuvre d'Ida Ekblad intitulée *The Rim And The Head* est elle constituée de divers objets trouvés (bouchons en plastique, récipient en aluminium, tiges de métal...) pris dans un bloc de béton moulé et peint. Abordant successivement des mouvements majeurs comme l'Arte Povera ou Support Surface, le parcours relie les œuvres autour des notions communes de recyclage et d'écologie.

Fine Arts: Princeton U. Art Museum displaying extensive Schorr collection

Janet Purcell | For The Times of Trenton By Janet Purcell | For The Times of Trenton

on July 01, 2015 at 7:00 AM, updated July 01, 2015 at 7:07 AM

Herb and Lenore Schorr have been collecting paintings, drawings and photographs created by working artists for the past 45 years.

Princeton University Art Museum visitors now have an opportunity to see twenty works from their collection. All have been donated to the museum or have been on long-term loan for two and a half decades.

Exhibition materials describe the collection as reconstructing "different but overlapping artistic communities—bands of cohorts who left indelible imprints on the art worlds of their day."

The Schorrs began collecting Abstract Expressionists such as Gottlieb and Gorky in the late 1960s but, in 1981 they met Jean-Michel Basquiat and collected many of his works until his death in 1988.

With their focus primarily on work of emerging artists they built a collection that offers viewers an opportunity to watch how each group of artists moved off with their own new impulses and ideas into a brand new form of expression. That the exhibition is not laid out chronologically adds to the energy.

The Schorr's donated collection began in 1978 with Jasper Johns' color lithograph *Pinion* in which we see disparate items such as a soup can, a ruler and a hot dog along with traces of Johns' feet, hands, one knee—and stenciled words. One footprint dangles from a wire. You don't come upon this print until you are well into the exhibition and your mind is already spinning with unanswered questions about exactly what these artists wanted viewers to see, to understand.

What the artists were saying is, "Think. Let us take you beyond beautiful landscapes and still lifes. Explore conundrums. Ask questions. React."

For example, take the large piece by Basquiat that you see as you enter the exhibit, *Leonardo da Vinci's Greatest Hits*, for which the artist used acrylic paints, oil paintstick, and paper collage on canvas. Influenced by *Gray's Anatomy* and referencing da Vinci's anatomical drawings of body parts and graphic notations, Basquiat brought humor and, more importantly, symbolism into this work. Note his depiction of African American folk hero John Henry on the lower left and be sure to read the accompanying label that explains Basquiat's interest in that symbol of the labor and civil rights movements.

Also on display is Basquiat's "Untitled" said to be his first painting on canvas. Until that work, he had been

leaving his images and words on concrete walls. This painting is said to have been in response to the "manic energy" of the city.

Keith Haring's "Barking Dogs and Lightbulb" is displayed nearby. Rendered in energetic strokes of brown and black on vibrant yellow, the dogs are said to be "an allegory of prejudice and police brutality..." while the lightbulb symbolizes life, energy and enlightenment.

The exhibit offers works by pop culture artists who, along with Jasper Johns, are James Rosenquist, Roy Lichtenstein, Alex Katz and Andy Warhol.

There are Warhol's silk screen and spray paint portraits, *Round Jackie* of Jacqueline Kennedy based on a photograph taken shortly before the President's assassination. And there is Rosenquist's large oil diptych *Ultra Tech* whose images do not seem to relate to one another. Hence, more mind spinning, more unanswerable questions—possibly what Rosenquist was hoping would happen? He, a former billboard painter, once said his art "is about contemporary life."

For his *Study for Rouen Cathedral*, an oil and magna on canvas inspired by Claude Monet's paintings of the cathedral, Lichtenstein simulated a dot printing process used in comic books, illustrations and advertisements. Standing close you see only a dizzying array of red, white and blue dots, but step back and the façade of the cathedral becomes clear.

Alex Katz's *Boy With A Branch*, on the other hand is clear from the first moment you see it. It's a close-up intimate view of the boy staring beyond the quiet place where we come upon him.

A segment of the exhibition focuses on photography and femininity with three large Chromogenic prints by Dana Hoey, Justine Kurland and Malerie Marder, who were graduated from Yale University in the 1990s. These narrative images are charged with mystery. In her essay that accompanies the exhibition, Haskell Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Kelly Baum, says, "These images have the appearance of casual snapshots, but they are in fact as carefully planned, choreographed, and executed as a Hollywood film..." These photographs bring more subtle questions to mind: Why are two women carrying a deer carcass out of the woods? Why is one naked woman counting money while another, also nude, is lying nearby reading and not paying any attention to the other. Why are two sisters posed seated and nude, knees touching, in close proximity to one another, but their eyes reveal a great distance between them.

In addition to the artists mentioned above, the exhibit includes works by: Nick Mauss, Ben Jones, Elizabeth Murray, and Scoli Acosta.

Curator Baum concludes her essay saying, "Although the works in *Collecting Contemporary* span four decades and attest to radically different artistic priorities, each demonstrates an interest in American visual culture. ...A subject of considerable potential and flexibility, American visual culture allowed the artists whose work is seen here to explore a range of issues, from the character of identity, gender, and subjectivity to the politics of representation in the decades after World War II."

Scoli Acosta: ELEMENTALISTHMUS
MCASD Downtown, San Diego, CA
February 3, 2013 - June 23, 2013

Artist: Scoli Acosta



Article by Amy Galpin
April 1, 2013

The Los Angeles Times published an article on Sunday, June 12, 2011, praising the work of Scoli Acosta. What was once quiet conversation in Southern California had become high profile accolades for this important artist. The article mentioned that although Acosta had gallery representation in Paris, L.A. galleries had been slow to notice the artist. Moreover, a small show of his work at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena (2011) marked his only one-man exhibition in the region. It seemed that The Los Angeles Times was pointing out to Southern California that it was time to appreciate this artist more fully. Enter the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. Curated by Jill Dawsey, the most recent addition to the Museum's curatorial staff, this exhibition is a reminder of how often the Museum has worked with significant artists at pivotal moments in their careers. For example, John Baldessari and William Kentridge both showed work at the MCASD early on and are linked to the institution's legacy. Indeed, the MCASD has a history of encouraging curators to show artists who are on the verge of enhanced success.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Acosta has lived in Paris and Cologne, and he recently completed a stint in Morocco at the Dar al-Ma'mûn International Residency Center for Artists. He currently resides in Los Angeles. Acosta's solo exhibition ELEMENTALISTHMUS includes a combination of new and old work in diverse media: sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, and video.

After seeing Chris Marker's film *The Sixth Side of the Pentagon*, which documents the 1967 March on the Pentagon in protest of the war in Vietnam and includes Abbie Hoffman's performance in which he attempts to levitate the complex, Acosta became interested in the incorporation of pentagonal shapes in his work. During *The Sixth Side of the Pentagon*, Hoffman asserted that levitation of the Pentagon can occur by concentrating psychic powers on the building until it turned orange and began to vibrate. *Levitating the Pentagon* (C-print, 2012), a small photograph included in the exhibition, depicts Acosta in Washington D.C. with an orange pentagon painting in his arms and raised above his head evoking Hoffman's proposition.

Acosta's pentagon paintings are highlighted in the MCASD exhibition with works such as *Ten Pentagonal Monochromes (tambourines)* (mixed media, 2009) and *Mars Triptych* (mixed media, 2012). There is elegance and calmness to the pentagon shapes and their arrangement, but the loose strings that daintily hang from the canvases are welcome reminders that an emphasis on perfect finishes remains absent here. The edges of the pentagon paintings are embellished with flattened bottle caps that give the works the appearance of tambourines. This playful approach to Minimalism arrests the viewer. The paintings are whimsical, but they also challenge audiences to consider how recognizable materials like bottle caps and basic geometric shapes have a tremendous capacity to be reinvented.

The exhibition text includes this apt description of Acosta's work: "The artist favors humble materials, economic gestures, and transparency with respect to craft. His installations emerge as poetic constellations that reveal traces of his research and production processes, as well as his movements throughout various landscapes." Highly professional museum preparators and installation teams often make exhibition presentations appear seamless; they hide wiring and imperfections. Here, Acosta pulls back the veil of immaculate museum installation. In collaboration with MCASD staff, Acosta reveals to his viewers the wires that connect the television sets that present video work in the installation and brightly colored electrical tape is used to secure the visible wires.

While electrical tape is visible and a few strands of string droop from his paintings, a balance exists in the exhibition. Although these things are exposed, they do not create chaos. Instead there is a harmony in the presentation and in the work displayed. This sensitive equilibrium appears in some of the artist's new work created as a result of his time in Morocco. On his drum form, *Self-Portrait (Morocco)* (mixed media, 2012), a simple and graceful rendering mimics the shape of the object. By creating the musical instrument the artist evokes cultural tradition, but the economy of line used in the gentle rendering of a form reinforces the elegiac balance witnessed in other works included in the exhibition.

Just as John Baldessari's and William Kentridge's projects at MCASD were signals of great and different things to come, so the art world will continue to hear from Acosta. Scoli Acosta: ELEMENTALISTHMUS proves that his work has developed significantly since the groundbreaking 2006 exhibition *Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement*, in which several strong pieces by the artist were included. Naturally the opportunity of a solo exhibition allows the artist to expand upon the work presented in group shows like *Phantom Sightings* and, more recently, the 2012 exhibition *Made in LA* at the Hammer Museum. Ultimately, ELEMENTALISTHMUS indicates that there are more places to travel to, more materials to reexamine, and ultimately more challenging work to be created by Acosta.

ART | CRITIQUE

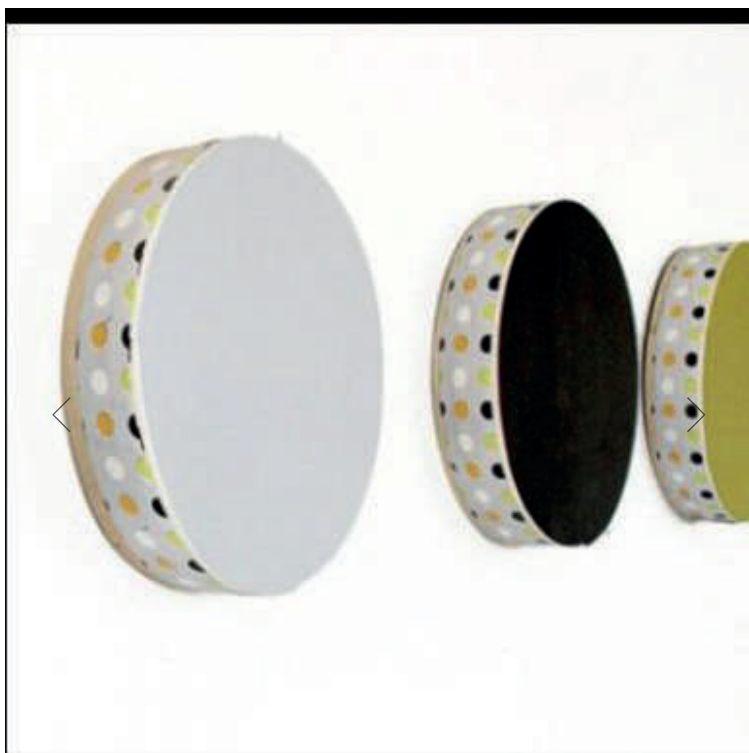
Music of Morocco

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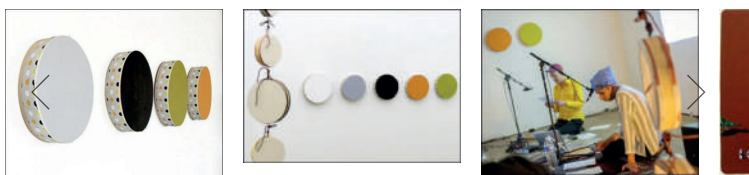
✍ Marie-Jeanne Caprasse

📅 14 Mai 2013

Parti à la rencontre de la culture marocaine et de sa musique, l'artiste californien Scoli Acosta a construit un parcours visuel qui puise son inspiration dans un instrument percussif traditionnel: le bendir.



Scoli Acosta, 5 Dots Ribbon Motif (Monochromes), 2012. Paint, canvas, wood. Diam: Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris, © Scoli Acosta



Lors d'une résidence aux environs de Marrakech en 2012, Scoli Acosta s'est tout particulièrement intéressé à la musique du Maroc. Écoutant des enregistrements réalisés sur place en 1959 par le compositeur et écrivain américain Paul Bowles, il remarque

l'omniprésence d'un instrument: le bendir. Ce petit tambourin parisart ART est composé d'un cadre circulaire et d'une toile tendue. PHOTO

Partant de ce modèle comme élément de base de son langage artistique, il va le décliner en peintures et sculptures. Ainsi, il utilisera ces cercles de bois et des matériaux fournis par un artisan local comme supports de monochromes, de motifs géométriques colorés mais aussi de boîtes rondes assemblées les unes aux autres et formant des sculptures-totems suspendues dans l'espace.

Son expression témoigne d'une tendance synchrétique. Il fait appel à la culture traditionnelle et contemporaine. Dans le langage de l'art contemporain, il peut suggérer une pratique bouddhiste en même temps que celle de l'artisanat. Ses œuvres sont des œuvres de peinture et ceux de l'instrument de musique.

Adeptes du détournement, ils s'emparent de la réalité et se l'approprient. Ils expliquent clairement l'enjeu de son travail : «J'essaie d'adhérer à une esthétique de la débrouillardise, c'est-à-dire le recyclage, la remise en état, la réadaptation et la reproduction d'objets du quotidien et d'objets trouvés. Cette approche repose sur la nécessité de réduire, réutiliser et recycler (pour le bien de la planète), tout comme celle d'isoler et sublimer la poésie du quotidien.»

Une part de son travail peut également évoquer le langage minimaliste. Mais l'artiste s'en distingue toujours en insérant un élément qui sème le trouble, comme dans ses *Pentagonal Monochrome* où des capsules de bouteilles aplaties incluses dans le cadre suggèrent les cymbalettes d'un tambourin. Dans l'ensemble de sept peintures *Mostly Mosaic Mandala Paintings*, Scolli Acosta associe pratique méditative bouddhiste et culture marocaine. Réalisant des peintures aux motifs abstraits sur de petites toiles toujours tendues sur des cercles de bois, il fusionne ce qui pourrait effectivement ressembler à un mandala tibétain et des motifs de mosaïque traditionnelle marocaine.

Tout le travail de Scolli Acosta fonctionne ainsi, par associations d'idées. Avec un intérêt particulier pour l'artisanat et la volonté de montrer la manière dont les choses sont faites, simplement, à la main. C'est pour lui, une façon de redonner vie aux choses et de faire un art considéré comme un mouvement perpétuel qui viendrait encore et toujours recycler les objets et les idées.

PERCUSSIONE AND QUIXOTE CAVENDES THE TRAVELS AND TRAVAILS OF SCOLI ACOSTA

di Andrew Berardini

C'è un artista che insegue uno scrittore. Lo insegue con in mano la stessa mappa che lui disegnò 63 anni prima, sul suo stesso itinerario, lungo autostrade polverose e attraverso suk profumati di spezie e polli allo spiedo. Era il 1959 e Paul Bowles, a bordo del suo maggiolino, raccolse le melodie, le cantilene e i ritmi del suo amato Marocco, dove avrebbe vissuto per il resto della vita. Scoli Acosta lo insegue, raccogliendo nuove melodie (o forse antiche) e producendone di proprie. Andrew Berardini narra di questa ricerca e dei suoi esiti.

Sulla via che parte da Tangeri, alla ricerca dello spirito di Paul Bowles.

Lungo quell'autostrada polverosa, lo spirito di Paul Bowles segue con occhi invisibili le geometrie cosmiche di tessuti e piastrelle, le loro energetiche astrazioni – le uniche ammissibili. Infesta i suk dei villaggi, sfiora i sacchi di legumi e di granaglie che frusciano e tintinnano, s'inebria dell'odore di menta e benzina, sorpassando gli spiedi di pecore e polli speziati. Sfiora, poi, i lunghi corpi flessuosi dei giovani uomini, forse sbircia sotto le loro ampie *djellaba*, l'orecchio sempre attento ai cambiamenti e al ritmo di questo posto, di questa gente, al cigolio di antiche porte, allo scoppiettio roco di vecchi veicoli, all'imbonimento aggressivo dei venditori, all'incedere sacro dell'arabo misto alla scivolosa morbidezza dei brandelli di francese, alle preghiere intermittenti che il muezzin grida al di sopra di archi incrinati e cupole ossidate, tetti di carta cattramata e antenne paraboliche mezza arrugginite, vernici screpolate color zafferano e salmone che rivelano mattoni levigati dal tempo. Lo spirito di Paul Bowles non bada alla calura di mezzogiorno, eppure si muove furtivo tra le schegge d'ombra. Da vivo aveva di certo il buonsenso di riposare lontano dal sole inclemente, anche se la maggior parte delle creature del deserto si sforza di ignorarne il castigo. Le sue storie spigolose e surreali sono pervase di questa luce, come lo è la gente del Marocco.

Nel 1956, dopo i protratti abusi di patiti del colonialismo, sedicenti protettori e possessori gelosi, il Marocco dichiarò l'indipendenza e l'anno seguente il sultano Mohammed fu incoronato reggente di Al-mamlaka Al-maghribiya, il "Regno d'Occidente". Nel 1959, in disparte ma attento, e armato del suo amore per la gente del Marocco, Bowles ricevette una borsa dalla Fondazione Rockefeller e dalla Library of Congress per girare in lungo e in largo e documentare il nuovo regno a bordo di un Maggiolino Volkswagen. Poiché usava un registratore a bobine che per funzionare aveva bisogno della corrente, il suo viaggio seguì la rete di distribuzione elettrica dell'epoca.

"Al posto di cronisti e poeti sono comparsi strumentisti e cantanti, e persino durante il capitolo più recente dell'evoluzione del paese – la guerra per l'indipendenza e l'istituzione dell'attuale regime – ogni fase della battaglia è stata celebrata in musica" scrisse Paul Bowles.

Professionisti di città e membri di tribù nomadi, artisti di strada e cantanti occasionali – con strumenti e voci, in arabo, francese e berbero – eseguirono, nel microfono di Bowles, canzoni ballabili e canzoni per le feste, querule cantilene e cupe melodie per il Ramadan e altri riti islamici assortiti nonché alcuni canti per vari residui di animismo (le religioni orientali, dalla cristianità all'Islam, non riescono quasi mai a disfarsi del tutto delle antiche usanze pagane della brava gente di campagna).

Bowles rincorreva lo spirito della gente e noi rincorriamo il suo. Come lui, anche tu viaggi in auto con due amici usando la sua cartina, seguendo passo passo il suo viaggio lungo il Marocco e registrando quello che trovi.

Ovviamente la ricerca di uno spirito è, di per sé, una caccia insolita.

Lo spirito non lo troverai. Magari un alito del suo passaggio, il lontano barlume delle sue visioni, ma poco più. Troverai una mera citazione che aleggia nell'aria, come i semi di tarassaco soffiati in cambio di un desiderio. Però troverai altro. Troverai case in mattoni di cemento colme di incantevoli tappetini a disegni colorati su cui diletanti con la

passione per la musica canteranno qualche canzone, ti offriranno una tazza di tè e racconteranno storie. Troverai fabbriche piene di signore in pausa pranzo, oppresse dalle tuniche, che sanno ritmare un canto a più voci con tamburi scorticati e tesi. Troverai un'infinità di venditori disperati, instancabili nelle loro suppliche acute e aggressive che mascherano una pressante povertà. Troverai disegni che cantano, tamburi che guardano, al posto delle vecchie leggende ne troverai di nuove, intessute dal tuo stesso macinino che traccia un reticolo attraverso un paese in cerca di musica e di Bowles, per trovare nell'avventura quello che si trova sempre nella ricerca: l'arte.

Questo, ovviamente, se sei Scoli Acosta.

Ricerca è una parola donchisciottesca. E Scoli, lettore di libri, camminatore esperto e sognatore incallito, lo è, senz'altro, anche lui. Pervaso di storie, insegue gli spiriti e trova, nelle sue ricerche tortuose e saghe epiche una straordinaria bellezza nelle cose quotidiane. A differenza del deliziosamente illuso Don, però, Scoli capisce che un mulino a vento è un mulino a vento, eppure sa che, se lo desideriamo, può anche essere un gigante predatore. L'immaginario e la realtà si fondono, si adulterano, ballano il tango. Un siffatto cammino, cominciato in un libro, rincorso in vari paesi con una visione in mente, traccia i viaggi e i travagli di Scoli Acosta.

Non è la prima caccia di Scoli sulle orme dello scrittore ostinato, dello scribacchino mitico così legato a un luogo che, per lettori e sognatori, era un tutt'uno con quello. Più di dieci anni fa andò in cerca di Gérard de Nerval, il poeta romantico che, in una notte in bianco e nero, s'impiccò a un lampione, il cappello in testa, l'ultima fatica infilata in tasca. Di lui Charles Baudelaire scrisse: "Rese l'anima nella strada più buia che riuscì a trovare". Era il poeta delle fantasticherie a metà e dei desideri persistenti, dei sogni caliginosi in una tenera alleanza con la logica dell'assurdità. Nei giardini del Palais-Royal, Nerval portava a spasso la sua aragosta Thibault legata all'estremità di un nastro di seta blu.

Secondo la logica onirica di Scoli, il modo migliore per capire Nerval (e forse anche Parigi e la Francia, attraverso questo spiraglio) è portare a spasso un'aragosta nei giardini. La citazione è il mezzo per orientarsi, per trovare un minuscolo indizio nelle pagine di un libro e seguirne le tracce, attraverso l'organico e il dissociativo, gli incontri casuali e le coincidenze insolite (per lo studioso di zen R.H. Blyth alcuni buddisti definiscono coincidenze "la compenetrazione di realtà diverse").

Gli spiriti di Nerval e di Bowles, di tutti i poeti peripatetici, si lasciano dietro un barlume delle loro visioni che, come direbbe Scoli, somiglia al calore di una sedia appena liberata da qualcuno. Non ci sono, ma la loro presenza si percepisce. C'è qualcosa di occulto in queste pratiche? Senza dubbio. Siamo sempre alla ricerca di significato nei misteri, fissiamo il vuoto cercando di dare un senso a ciò che non ne ha, di intuire un qualche segreto nel riflesso dello specchio d'ossidiana, nel disegno delle foglie del tè. Vorremmo tanto sentire una scintilla di fratellanza, di ispirazione spettrale, portare fino a qualunque compimento lo strano momento d'estasi fugace donatoci dall'ignoto.

È un poeta che ne cerca un altro. Se Allen Ginsberg riesce a vedere Walt Whitman nel corridoio della frutta del supermercato, illuminato al neon, perché non possiamo farlo anche noi? Perché Scoli con il suo amico e collaboratore Andreas Oskar Hirsch e la sua ragazza, l'artista Alison O'Daniel, non può trovare lo spirito di Paul Bowles ancora con l'orecchio teso ai canti del Marocco, mentre mormora ritmi a bocca chiusa, batte il piede, strimpella l'aria con le sue ombre, tentando di catturare le canzoni di un popolo che sta cambiando, che cerca la sua strada attraverso i secoli, e lui e Scoli, separati da cinquant'anni, non sono altro che angeli custodi, come forse tutti i poeti?

Scoli non è un poeta con le parole, ma con le immagini. Eppure, quando recita le storie, quando pronuncia le parole, queste assumono un ritmo soporifero, narcotico, sognante, e sono declamate in modo tale che, ascoltando le sue visioni troppo

attentamente, si rischia di cominciare a enunciare i propri recitativi con la stessa cadenza ipnotica.

Poeta con le immagini, musicista con le cose, ho sentito Scoli suonare i suoi tamburelli pentagonali monocromatici, decine e decine di tappi di bottiglia che tintinnavano negli oggetti più potenti in assoluto eppure realizzati dal sognatore itinerante. La purezza del monocromo (oscillante fra invettive alla Reinhardt e proiezioni pittoriche) diventa oggetto quotidiano, immagine e strumento, la cui disposizione sembra, e forse è, occulta, e quale strumento migliore del tamburello per un rituale, il tintinnio del metallo e la percussione della mano sulla pelle tesa e rigida. Accenni del libro di Chris Marker *The Sixth Side of the Pentagon* [Il sesto lato del Pentagono] e del tentativo di Abbie Hoffman di far levitare il Pentagono saltano fuori nel conversare con Scoli (non potendo fermarla, l'unica reazione appropriata alla follia della politica estera americana è l'assurdità dell'arte, sperando che la seconda smascheri la psicosi della prima), ma il pentagono sembra essenzialmente ciò che è, immagine, numero, mistero alchemico così potente e occulto da non avere neppure bisogno di quei riferimenti. Gli oggetti essenziali hanno il potere di burlarsi di ogni sorta di significato loro attribuito e, nell'arco della sua carriera, Scoli intesse con perizia, come per magia, tutte queste strane storie, come un flauto che incanta i serpenti fino a farli danzare.

In un campo in Francia gli animali del circo legati alle catene mangiano cerchi d'erba, formano *moiré* di brama – muschiati e stravaganti. Lanciando in aria una macchina fotografica se ne potrebbe catturare la bellezza dall'alto, nella rotazione confusa della macchina si formano nuovi *moiré*, emergono e si creano disegni in materiali improbabili. Motivi capaci di far sfarfallare le cose ferme alla vista, i *moiré* sono i disegni increspatisi di una goccia di pioggia nell'acqua, e se la macchina fotografica è impermeabile si potranno vedere le onde impercettibili volteggiare da sotto, il firmamento ondeggiate dei pesci. L'acqua, tanto amata per i suoi ritmi umidi e le sue maree, implora nelle increspature che un dipinto tutto suo galleggi in superficie, un viso dipinto rivolto al cielo, tenuto in alto da bottiglie di plastica fissate alla cornice. Il titolo, ovviamente, è *Orange Floating Moiré Effect*, 2011.

Storie e visioni si propagano, si fondono, si rincorrono e si citano, finché il lavoro d'indagine psichica si compone in una forma. Scoli non si limita a dar la caccia ai mulini a vento e a citare l'essenziale, è anche un creatore di cose, dal momento che la creazione riserva i suoi piaceri e le sue bizzarre scoperte, la pittura e il disegno, l'immediato parallelo imagista con la poesia verbosa, gli umili oggetti cimeli di avventure. La sua mostra più recente alla Galerie Laurent Godin di Parigi presenta strumenti a percussione, il *bendir*, un tamburello tradizionale marocchino scoperto durante i viaggi nel Regno d'Occidente, ciascuno decorato con il caratteristico tratteggio danzante e i particolari colori terziari che Scoli usa magnificamente per dipinti e costumi. Le immagini su questi tamburelli sono tratte dalle strade e dalle case del Marocco, che qui amplificano lo stile tipico di anonimi artigiani.

Tutti insieme questi tamburi, i monocromi pentagonali, le peregrinazioni letterarie, la poetica strapata con serendipità dal groviglio del quotidiano si fondono in una piccola cosmologia, tutta di Scoli, un universo di significato creato con grazia e umorismo, impiegato in insolite situazioni, dipinti, oggetti, azioni e tutto ciò che sta nel mezzo.

Lontano dall'autostrada di Tangeri, nella città di Los Angeles, nel profumo dei fiori di loto intorno alla curva lenta dell'Echo Park Lake, a certi angoli di strada e facciate di negozi che hanno risuonato delle sue performance, mentre tocco abiti dai colori bizzarri e calzini vivaci nei negozi dell'usato, sento il calore della sua presenza, il canto dei suoi passi e il ritmo delle sue storie. Quando si avventura nel mondo per raccogliere citazioni e seguire i racconti fino al loro stravagante compimento, il suo spirito indugia gioioso. Ritorna sempre con strumenti e immagini, storie affascinanti raccontate in modi affascinanti, mostre e oggetti ricavati da una vita nomade vissuta straordinariamente.

LOS ANGELES

PERCUSSIVE PAINTINGS AND QUIXOTIC CADENCES; THE TRAVELS AND TRAVAILS OF SCOLI ACOSTA

BY ANDREW BERARDINI



An artist chases a writer, clutching the map the latter made 63 years earlier, following the same itinerary along dusty highways, through souks scented by spices and roasting chickens. The year was 1959 and Paul Bowles, in his Beetle, gathered the melodies, chants and rhythms of his beloved Morocco, where he was to remain for the rest of his life. Scoli Acosta follows him, gathering new (or maybe ancient) melodies, and producing some of his own. Andrew Berardini narrates this research and its results.

Above - "Elementalisthmus" exhibition view, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, 2013. Courtesy: Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

Opposite - Ten Pentagonal Monochrome (Tambourines), 2009. Courtesy: Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

On the road from Tangier, you'll search for the ghost of Paul Bowles.

Somewhere along that dusted highway, haunting the village souks, fingering their sacks full of clattering beans and whispery grains, huffing the scent of spearmint and gasoline, past skewered sheep and spicy chickens, the ghost of Paul Bowles traces invisible eyes over the cosmic geometries of textiles and tiles, its lusty abstractions the only allowable. He brushes up against the long lithe bodies of the young men, perhaps even peeking beneath their baggy djellabas, always with his ear tuned to the shift and rhythm of this place, these people, the creak of ancient doors, the phlegmy cough of geriatric motors, the patter of hard sales, the holy strut of Arabic mixing with the soft slither of holdover French, the punctuating prayers that the muezzin hollers over the cracked arches and tarnished domes, tarpaper roofs and rusting satellite dishes, the crumbling paints in saffron and salmon revealing brick worn smooth. The ghost of Paul Bowles doesn't mind the noon heat, but still sidles between the slivered shadows. While alive, he surely had the sense to siesta away from the punishing sun even as most desert denizens endeavor to ignore its solar retribution. His hard surreal stories are suffused with its light, and so are the people of Morocco.

After lengthy abuse from colonial lovers, would-be protectors and jealous possessors, in 1956 Morocco declared independence, and the next year Sultan Mohammed was crowned regent of Al-mamlaka Al-maghribiya, "the Western Kingdom." Bowles, sidelined but watching, armed with a love of the Moroccan people, received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Library of Congress in 1959 to travel the depth and breadth of the new kingdom in a Volkswagen Beetle and record. His trail followed the electrical grid of Morocco at the time, as Bowles taped on a reel-to-reel that needed to be plugged in to work.

"Instrumentalists and singers have come into being in lieu of chroniclers and poets, and even during the most recent chapter in the country's evolution—the war for independence and the setting up of the present regime—each phase of the struggle has been celebrated in song," he wrote.

With instruments and voices, in Arabic, French, and Berber, into Bowles's microphone urban professionals and nomadic tribesmen, street buskers and week-end songsters played songs for dancing and songs for parties, wailing chants and somber tunes for Ramadan, sundry other Islamic rites as well as a few ditties for a variety of animistic holdovers (Eastern religions, from Christianity to Islam, never quite succeed in stamping out the ancient, pagan ways of good country people).

Bowles was chasing the spirit of the people and we are chasing the spirit of Bowles. Like him, you travel in a car with two friends, using his map, shadowing his voyage across Morocco and recording what you find.

Looking for a ghost is its own weird quest, of course.

You will not find the ghost. Maybe a whiff of its passing, a distant flicker of its visions, but little more. You will find a mere quotation fluttering in the air, like the tufted seeds of a wished-upon dandelion. But you will find other things. You will find cinderblock apartments lined with luscious rugs rich with color and pattern where amateurs with the love of a good tune will play you a song or two, pass a cup of tea, and tell stories. You will find factories filled with lunch-breaking ladies, laden with robes, who can thump out a chorus on drums skinned and tight. You will find endless desperate salesmen untiring in their pitch, their aggressive pleas overlaying an urgent poverty. You will find patterns that sing, drums that look; in the place of old legends you will find new ones, woven out of your own jealousy crisscrossing a country looking for music and looking for Bowles and finding, in the adventure, the thing you always find in your questing: art.

That is, of course, if you are Scolì Acosta.

Questing is a Don Quixote kind of a word. And Scolì, reader of books, expert ambler and inveterate dreamer, is surely quixotic. Filled with stories, he chases after ghosts and finds in his meandering quests epic sagas and extraordinary beauty in ordinary things. Unlike the delightfully deluded Don however, Scolì understands that the windmill is a windmill, but he also knows that if we wish it, the windmill can be a marauding giant. The imaginary and reality commingle, adulterate, tango. Such a journey, begun in a book, chased across countries with a vision, easily maps the travels and travails of Scolì Acosta.

This is not Scolì's first quest in search of a wayward writer, the mythical scribbler so tied to a place that to readers and dreamers they are one and the same. Over a decade ago, Scolì went in search of Gérard de Nerval, the Romantic poet

who one black and white night hung himself from a lamppost, hat on his head, last literature tucked into his pocket. Charles Baudelaire wrote he "delivered his soul in the darkest street that he could find." He was a poet of half-reveries and long longings, of misty dreams in a tender alliance with the logic of absurdity. On meanders through the gardens of the Palais Royal, on the end of a blue silk ribbon, Nerval would walk his pet lobster, Thibault.

The best way to understand Nerval (and maybe Paris and France through this small chink), according to the dreamy logic of Scolì, is to walk a lobster of your own through the gardens. The quotation is way of getting one's bearings, finding a small hint in the pages of a book, and chasing its trail through the organic and dissociative chance encounters and unusual coincidences (according to Zen scholar RH Blythe some Buddhists call coincidences "the interpenetration of different realities").

The ghosts of Nerval and Bowles, of all the peripatetic poets, leave in their passing some glimmer of their visions, as Scolì might say like the warmth of a seat that someone else has left behind. They are not there, but their presence is felt. Is there something occult in these practices? Surely. We are always looking for meaning in the mysteries, staring down into the void and trying to make sense of the senselessness, to divine some secret from the reflection of the obsidian mirror, the patterns of tea leaves. We yearn to feel a spark of fraternity, of spectral inspiration, to grasp the strange moment of flickering ecstasy bestowed by the unknown and take it to whatever end.



It is one poet looking for another. If Allen Ginsberg can spot Walt Whitman haunting the produce aisle of the local neon fruit supermarket, why can't we? Why can't Scolì, along with his friend and collaborator Andreas Oskar Hirsch and girlfriend, the artist Alison O'Daniel, find the ghost of Paul Bowles still tuned into the songs of Morocco, humming its rhythms, tapping his foot, strumming the air with his shadows as he still tries to find the songs of a people undergoing change, finding their way through the centuries, he and Scolì half a century apart yet both recording angels, as perhaps all poets are?

Scolì is not a poet with words but with images. When he does recite stories though, enunciates words, they take on a soporific rhythm, narcotic, dreamy and definitely declaimed in such a way that if you listen to his uttered visions too closely, you may begin to utter your recitatives in the same hypnotic cadence.

A poet with images, a musician with things, I have heard Scolì play his pentagonal monochrome tambourines, scores of bottle-caps rattling away in the most powerful objects yet crafted by the itinerant dreamer. The purity of the monochrome (pendulous with Reinhardt diatribes and painterly projections) becomes the everyday thing, an image and an instrument, the arrays of which look and probably are occult, and what better instrument for the ritual than a tambourine, the jangle of metal and the percussion of hand against the stretched taut skin. Mention of Chris Marker's *The Sixth Side of the Pentagon* and Abbie Hoffman's attempt to levitate the Pentagon crop up in conversation with Scolì (unable to halt it, the only appropriate response to the madness of American foreign policy is the absurdity of art, the latter hopefully revealing the psychosis of the former), but the pentagon seems so essentially what it is, such a powerful image, number, alchemical and occult mystery, that it does not even need those references. Essential objects have the power of teasing all kinds of meanings to themselves, and throughout his career Scolì has expertly charmed out all these strange stories, a flute teasing a slither of snakes to dance.

In a field in France, circus animals eat circles around their tethers, forming moirés of hunger, musky and strange. Throw a camera into the air and you might be able to capture their beauty from above. New moirés form in the blurry spin of the camera in the air, patterns emerge and form in unlikely materials. A motif that can make still things shimmy in your vision, moiré is the rippling patterns of a raindrop on water; if you waterproof your camera you might see its subtle waves circle out from below, the undulating firmament of the fish. The water, so loved for its wet rhythms and tidal waves, begs in its ripples for a painting of its own to float on its surface, painted face toward the sky, held aloft by plastic bottles rigged to its frame. Titled of course, *Orange Floating Moiré Effect*, 2011.

Stories and visions ripple out coalesce, get chased and quote, the psychic detective work eventually settling into a form. Scoli is not just a chaser of windmills and a quoter of the essential, he is also a maker of things, making having its own pleasures and odd discoveries, the painting and drawing, the ready imagistic parallel to the wordy poem, the objects humble relics of adventures. His most recent exhibition at Galerie Laurent Godin in Paris displays percussion instruments, the bendir, a traditional Moroccan tambourine discovered in his travels in the Western Kingdom, each painted with the distinctively dancing line and quirky, tertiary palette with which Scoli handsomely colors his paintings and wardrobes. The pictures on the faces of these tambourines are patterns culled from the streets and houses of Morocco, signature styles by anonymous craftsman, amplified here.

These drums, the pentagonal monochromes, the literary wanderings, the poetics serendipitously plucked from the morass of quotidian, all coalesce into a small cosmology, unique to Scoli, a universe of meaning crafted with humor and grace, invested in odd situations, paintings, objects, actions and all things in between.

Far from the Tangier highway, in the city of Los Angeles, wafting off the lotus blossoms around the slow curve of the Echo Park Lake, on certain street corners and in storefronts that have resonated with his performances, fingering oddly colored clothes and bright socks at thrift stores, I can feel the warmth of his presence, the song of his footfalls and the rhythm of his stories. When he wanders out into the wide world to collect quotations and trail stories to their whimsical ends, his spirit joyfully lingers. He always reappears with instruments and images, mesmerizing stories told in mesmerizing ways, exhibitions and objects culled from a nomadic life lived extraordinarily.

Opposite - "Music of Morocco" exhibition view, 2013
 Courtesy: Gallery Laurent Godin. © Grégory Copitet
 Below - "Elementalsthmus" exhibition view, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, 2013.
 Courtesy: Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris





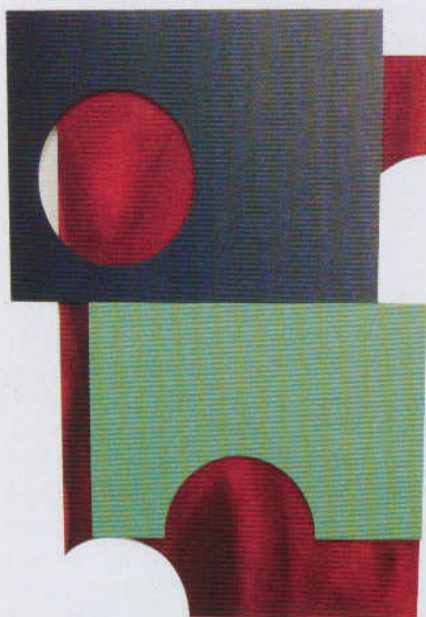
Lyon Art Fair: *solo shows only*

À deux pas de la Sucrière, site principal de la 11^e biennale de Lyon, Docks Art Fair, petite foire biennale et très pointue elle aussi, ouvre pour la troisième fois ses portes avec 33 solo shows.

Microfoire réunissant 33 exposants, Docks Art Fair s'offre le luxe d'être à la fois régionale, internationale, sélective et exigeante. Sélectionné par un comité lui-même international – formé de critiques d'art, de commissaires et de collectionneurs (dont la Turinoise Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo) –, l'échantillon retenu parmi les 80 postulants est composé à parts à peu près égales de galeries émergentes et d'autres plus établies, avec un impératif commun : n'exposer qu'un seul artiste sur leur stand. La galerie Sandra Nakicen, de Lyon, appartient à la première catégorie. Née en mars 2009, en pleine crise économique, elle a d'abord connue une existence nomade, baladant ses projets artistiques d'appartement en bureau, d'entrepôt en château, avant de se fixer en novembre dernier au 15 de la rue de la Thi-baudière. Pour Docks Art Fair, elle présente une installation faite d'un wall-drawing de Ludovic Pasquier, qui vit et travaille à Lyon. Maniant le crayon et le pinceau avec une dextérité et une audace peu communes, toujours en noir et blanc, il s'inspire de scènes de film et de presse magazine populaire. Lyonnaise elle aussi, la Modern Art Galerie est le récent prolongement du Modern Art Café, repaire d'artistes de la Croix-Rousse. Son choix pour la foire s'est porté sur le photographe cubain Luis Mallo et ses paysages urbains et ses chantiers partiellement masqués ou voilés par des grillages, barreaux ou rideaux métalliques.

Parmi les fidèles de la première heure, Analix Forever, de Genève, présente des sculptures et vidéos de Joanna Malinowska, néo-duxchapienne polonaise vivant à New York, qui s'approprie et revisite des objets rituels ou des œuvres historiques de l'art moderne. Laurent Godin, qui avait remporté un énorme succès en 2009 avec le New-Yorkais David Kramer, dédie cette année son stand au Californien Scoli

Acosta et à ses lustres fleuris écolos, faits de photocopies de panneaux voltaïques [ill. ci-dessus]. Présents pour la première fois, la Parisienne Aline Vidal expose Stéphane Thidet, l'Autrichien Mario Mauroner les nouvelles créations de Bruno Peinado, et Cortex Athletico les derniers tableaux-objets de Franck Eon [ill. ci-dessous]. Grâce à la manne financière du ministère de la Culture et de l'Institut français, sensibilisés par la situation politique nord-africaine, trois galeries tunisiennes se joignent aux autres nouvelles venues : Ammar Farhat avec des



FRANCK EON *Sans titre (Découpe rouge vert gris)* 2011, peinture à l'huile et acrylique sur panneau de bois découpé, 135 x 121 cm. **Galerie Cortex Athletico, Bordeaux**
Professeur aux Beaux-Arts de Bordeaux, Franck Eon revisite l'abstraction en jouant avec des panneaux de contreplaqué découpés, de formats et de couleurs différents, qu'il superpose de manière apparemment aléatoire. Entre 6 000 et 8 000 € la composition.



SCOLI ACOSTA

Solar Petal Carnation Chandelier

2008, photocopies de panneaux solaires, fil, panneaux solaires, diodes, bandes, éléments de lampes, 40 x 91,4 cm. **Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris**

Champion de «l'esthétique de la débrouillardise», ce Californien de 38 ans produit à partir d'objets du quotidien un art polymorphe : performances, installations, peintures et sculptures, telle cette suspension fleurie qui s'éclaire à la tombée de la nuit. Prix : de 1 400 à 15 000 €.

photos de Meriem Bouderbala, artiste de Sidi Bou-Saïd qui a été montrée à de nombreuses reprises en France, notamment à l'Institut du monde arabe et à l'espace Paul Ricard, Kanvas avec des peintures de Mohamed Ben Slama, et El Marsa avec des photos de Patricia K. Triki. En 2009, 15 000 visiteurs ont arpenté les allées de Docks Art Fair en quête de nouveautés. Tous ont été sensibles à son format intime, son climat convivial et son extrême lisibilité. Rien n'a encore remplacé les one-man shows pour faire découvrir et mettre en valeur l'univers d'un artiste. Ici, indépendamment du poids et de la notoriété de leur galerie, tous, inconnus ou confirmés, locaux ou internationaux, ont droit à la même superficie, la même configuration. À chacun, avec ses moyens et son langage propres, d'y faire passer son message.

Isabelle de Wavrin

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June 11th, 2011

Everyday objects turn to art in Scoli Acosta's hands

The artist's sculpture, installation, drawing, painting and photography alter the recognizable into the whimsical.



Scoli Acosta outside his apartment in Echo Park with a "Copper Pentagonal Monochrome (tambourine)" he created from a series called "Levitating the Pentagon", inspired by the 1967 March on the Pentagon in Washington D.C and an interest in painting. (Barbara Davidson, Los Angeles Times / June 12, 2011)

By Holly Myers, Special to the Los Angeles Times

June 12, 2011

"The aesthetics of resourcefulness" is a phrase that Scoli Acosta has often used to describe his wide-ranging artwork, which includes sculpture, installation, drawing, painting, photography, video and performance. It is equally applicable to the Echo Park apartment that doubles as his studio.

The stairs and landing outside his door are lined with small, potted cotton plants, from which he hopes to gather enough cotton to one day make a T-shirt (after going to India to learn how to make a spinning wheel). His furniture is gently refurbished secondhand fare; his curtains a lovely hand-stitched patchwork. The kitchen table is dotted with flowerpots he's made by hollowing out found bricks. "I enjoy using my hands," he says. "I like to see how things are made and to accentuate the handmade."

Thirty-eight years old and slight of frame, Acosta has a sheepish but subtly theatrical demeanor that gives every conversation the feel of a performance. Though he grew up in Lincoln Heights and Baldwin Hills, he lived in Europe on and off through his 20s, speaks French, some German and some Spanish,

and maintains a somewhat self-conscious relationship to English, his diction intermittently formal and colloquial. He is fond of reciting poems from memory and does a wonderful reading of "As Above, So Below," a children's book (yet unpublished) that he made in collaboration with writer Joseph Mosconi.

In discussing his work, however, he is tentative and occasionally uneasy, as if hesitant to craft a verbal narrative for what is a highly organic and associative process. His installations — tidy arrangements of lovingly crafted, often colorful objects, many of them vaguely recognizable (a floral chandelier, a shopping bag, a brick) but cast in odd, illogical arrangements — feel like rooms transported from some other world, where the rules are similar but different from ours. Whimsical and elegant, they seem to set their own terms, deflecting interpretation.

"I think about the work more as poetry," he says. "I like it to have this room to breathe." His process is one of meandering absorption, his work the outgrowth, in many cases, of his interactions with a particular place. The photographs, videos and sculptures that appear in "Rippling: An Earnest Moire Effect," for instance, a recent small solo exhibition at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena, were conceived on a residency last fall in Carquefou, France. (Though not currently represented by a gallery in L.A. — most of his shows here have been in museums and nonprofit spaces — he's shown extensively in Europe.) "I enjoy going into specific situations and putting together the information around me," he says. "Finding my place inside of that environment, creating these small cosmologies out of really specific elements that are attractive to me for some reason."

The effect of this particular environment was strikingly evident in an email he sent midway through the two-month residency. When he spoke shortly before his departure, he'd been painting on canvas for the first time since high school and had just completed a series of 10 small monochrome paintings, each in the shape of a pentagonal tambourine. He'd pointed out the details of the paintings' craftsmanship with pride, from the handmade stretcher bars to the flattened bottle cap jingles, but sounded oddly unconvinced by his account of the work's conceptual underpinnings.

In the email, however, his excitement was palpable. He'd been at a crossroads, he wrote, with the pentagonal paintings, "poking around in some weird formalist stuff I'm not accustomed to thinking about and don't really have a grip on either." He was enchanted, however, by the French countryside. He'd never seen so many wild mushrooms. A circus had come to a nearby field. "The hoot of the owl was replaced by the lion's roar," he wrote. "The animals were on chains staked to a central point and would eat circles out of the fields. The circles multiplied every day as they were moved to new spots. It was beautiful. I started tracing the circles in flour and taking photos from above by throwing my camera in the air."

He did continue to paint but abandoned the weighty mantle of the monochrome for the looser, more playful figurative style of his drawings. He also wandered the landscape, taking photographs and videos. He photographed the circles that the animals formed in the grass, then the circling ripples in a puddle. He sank his camera to the floor of a tide pool on the beach, threw pebbles across the surface and recorded the ripples from below. He cut huge, concentric circles from a roll of black carpet that had been left in his studio, dragged them onto the grass and took aerial photographs by spinning his camera over his head. He cut circles out of canvas, then tossed them into the air and photographed them from below.

The charm and vitality of the work that resulted, like that of Acosta's other memorable installations in recent years — in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's "Phantom Sightings" in 2008 or "Bountiful," his solo show at LAX Art the same year — stem in part from his insistence on maintaining transparency, on laying bare both the craft and the enchantment.

"It's about bringing attention to the mechanics of the piece," he says. "Normally, something is considered well made when you can't see how it's done. I think the way that I work flips that idea around. Even though you can see how it's made, the mechanics of it, it still has a beauty and a magic to it. I love that. Everything is such junk these days, it's really depressing. There's a real exchange that happens when you make something, when you use your hands. You create the world."

A l'Ac(c)ostage !

Scoli Acosta au Frac Basse-Normandie

L'artiste américain Scoli Acosta expose deux installations et une série de dessins au Frac Basse-Normandie. Une plongée dans l'univers de l'artiste, aux confins d'un monde imaginaire et réaliste fait d'objets trouvés, de références historiques et de réflexions sur la société d'aujourd'hui.

« *Mon travail ne se réduit pas à un médium particulier. Il se construit à la façon d'un roman quotidien, qui s'équilibre entre les éléments essentiels de l'idée et le hasard des trouvailles parmi des matériaux qui sont à portée de main...* », énonce l'artiste pluridisciplinaire Scoli Acosta. Ces différents aspects de son travail sont parfaitement mis en avant dans l'exposition enivrante *Drawings and Projects* qui lui est consacrée au Frac Basse-Normandie à Caen.

Comme l'indique le titre, l'exposition caennaise insiste sur la pluralité des médiums utilisés par l'artiste. Les dessins, issus de son carnet de croquis, illustrent son environnement et sont, dans un même temps, le produit de son imagination. Fondamentaux, ils servent de répertoire et de sources à ses projets, vidéos et installations qui sont toutes elles-mêmes composites, assemblages de peintures, sculptures, photographies, vidéos... Le tout restant néanmoins très organisé.

Cette exposition nous plonge ainsi dans l'univers de l'artiste, un univers fascinant composé d'influences diverses, mexicaines, américaines et intimes, ancestrales et contemporaines, d'objets trouvés et d'autres créés par l'artiste, un univers fait de jeux – de mots, d'associations, souvent inattendus et fortuits. C'est ainsi que Scoli Acosta mêle des objets trouvés mexicains, petites mains remplies qu'il a fondues en bronze et reproduites en plusieurs exemplaires disséminés dans l'installation *Founded*, à des vidéos d'Agnès Varda, ou encore à ses *Pentagonal Monochrome* – monochromes-tambourins pentagonaux qui font à la fois référence à la Marche vers le Pentagone de 1967, manifestation contre la guerre du Vietnam, et à des peaux tendues. Comme pour revenir à une sorte d'archaïsme de la peinture, tout en proposant une nouvelle composante plastique à l'œuvre, le son. Dans ses inventions, l'artiste a le besoin, comme il aime à le préciser, de « *réduire, réutiliser et recycler (pour le bien de la planète)* » tout en cherchant à « *isoler et sublimer la poésie du quotidien* », créant ainsi un monde burlesque, lyrique et onirique, tout à la fois empreint de réalités.

L'installation *Big Well II*, par exemple, fait référence à l'histoire de la ville de Greensburg, au Kansas, qui a particulièrement marqué l'artiste lors de son voyage au cœur des Etats-Unis en 2000, en raison des divers événements qui ont bouleversé la ville, de manière presque acharnée. Le hasard a voulu que la ville soit pourvue de deux gros trous : elle abrite le plus grand puits du monde creusé de la main de l'homme et fut victime de la chute d'une météorite qui a laissé un impact profond dans la terre. De plus, en 2007, une violente tornade a détruit la majorité de la ville qui fut reconstruite selon la « *green attitude* », puisqu'elle est devenue une « *Communauté Verte Modèle* ». Ces hasards et les nouvelles préoccupations écologiques de la Greensburg – préoccupations très importantes pour l'artiste – l'ont poussé à s'inspirer des mythes et histoires qui ont marqué la population. Ainsi, le motif des panneaux solaires – grilles remplies de rectangles dans un camaïeu de bleus qui ne sont pas sans évoquer les *Couleurs* de Gerhard Richter – est décliné dans toute la salle, à la fois sur des peintures, sur des socles et sur les bouquets d'œillets. Les bouquets d'œillets eux-mêmes sont démultipliés dans l'installation. Deux sont suspendus, d'autres sont représentés dans les peintures. Il étend encore le motif des œillets de manière plus subtile en jouant sur le nom anglais « *carnation* » qu'il décompose en « *car nation* », métaphore de la société états-unienne. Ainsi, on retrouve également des jantes de voitures dans l'installation et la photographie d'une Coccinelle (Volkswagen) happée par la végétation – qui prend à peu de choses près les dimensions d'une coccinelle-insecte – exposée discrètement sur un mur au ras du sol, à peine visible.

Tout le travail de Scoli Acosta fonctionne ainsi, par associations d'idées. L'œuvre devient inépuisable, la visite interminable si l'on se prend au jeu de l'artiste et si l'on part à la recherche – comme une

chasse au trésor – de tous les détails, de toutes les concordances entre les œuvres. Ainsi, les dessins servent de passerelles dans le couloir entre les installations. Les motifs présents dans ceux-ci se retrouvent dans la vidéo *Drawing From The Lady of The Lake* (2011) qui, comme une balise, indique le chemin de l'exposition. Ces mêmes motifs sont encore repris dans les installations et les performances de l'artiste. Ils sont comme des fils conducteurs, et c'est bien de fil conducteur qu'il s'agit. En effet, dans tout le lieu de l'exposition, Scoli Acosta laisse apparents les fils électriques – à la plus grande joie des régisseurs – et les souligne par des morceaux de scotch colorés, pour insister sur leur présence, sur la dangereuse présence de l'électricité pour la planète, devenue pourtant invisible à nos yeux.

Sans poursuivre la description de l'exposition du Frac et pour conserver une part de mystère, s'il est une chose à retenir, c'est bien l'idée que, malgré le mélange des disciplines et la grande variété des formes et des médiums, l'œuvre du plasticien polyvalent est construite de manière très cohérente. Il travaille à partir d'un répertoire de formes et de son univers pour proposer une œuvre organique, en évolution constante, continue et cyclique, où tout se répond, tout dialogue et concorde, pour le plus grand plaisir des visiteurs explorateurs. A la fois narrative, tout en étant parvenue à garder une grande liberté d'expression et d'imagination et à laisser une place au hasard des rencontres et des découvertes, réaliste et sur-réaliste, l'œuvre de Scoli Acosta, qui s'inspire à la fois de son histoire – américaine et mexicaine – et de sa propre vie, est belle, engagée et poétique, drôle et passionnante. Difficile de s'en défaire !

>**Scoli Acosta, *Drawings and Projects***, du 26 février au 13 avril au Frac Basse-Normandie, Caen.

Crédits photos :

Une : Scoli Acosta, « 24 Compositions Composition (elements) », 2011. © Marc Damage.

Article : Scoli Acosta, *Drawings and Projects*, « Big Well II », 2011. © Marc Damage.

(Lire sur notre site : <http://www.mouvement.net/index.php?idStarter=217733>)

Artiste(s) :

Scoli Acosta artiste

Gerhard Richter artiste

Claire Kueny rédacteur

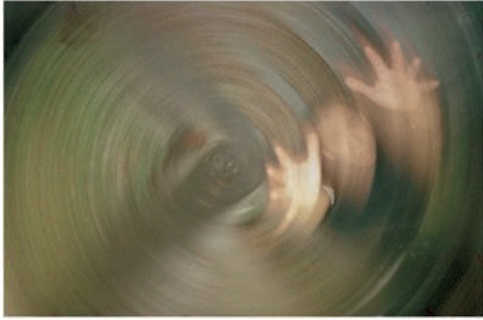
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ARTslant

A Quasi-Documentary and Geo-Poetic Wandering: A Collaborative Conversation with Scoli Acosta

Los Angeles, May 2010:



Remember the street where you were once hit by a car, a red Chevy near the flickering streetlamp two doors down from your grandmother's, the skid-marks scarred the asphalt for nearly a year. The bookstore where you met the boy you very almost married, he was in Anthropology you were in Literary Non-Fiction perusing a dog-eared copy of Joan Didion, feeling cool and West Coast urbane; the bookstore's calico cat purring, her eyes clenched shut, past your leg. The dodgy ocher café where your computer got nabbed, you swore it was just there, other patrons' showed great gentility to your plight while a cappuccino wand frothed a pot of whole milk somewhere not far away, the sound both comforting and grating. Every time you return, these memories take a hold of you, if only for a fleeting instant, but they are there as much as the cement and asphalt, the shelves of paperbacks, the wooden tables wiped smooth by a white towel that runs over its surface thirty times a day to clean the spilled coffee and muffin crumbs, the smells and sounds that compose the places as much as the walls and ceilings. These places of reminiscence can be impersonal as well. The Statue of Liberty, the Eiffel Tower, Sunset Boulevard. These too have their own memories, cultural memories, and not just memories always exactly, but associations.

Reality is as much composed as material.

The material reality is empirically quantifiable. It can be measured and mapped. There is a countable number of streetlights, an inventory of the books, the Eiffel Tower has a height that's immutable. The reality that is composed of memory and emotion, imagination and dreams, is more difficult to gauge, to trace, to pin down. The two are not separate however, but exist together. There is a permeability between imagination and reality. Reality inspires imagination, imagination affects reality.

Scoli Acosta with his performances, drawings, sculptures, and installations captures this permeability between the imaginative and the real. The disjointed narrative hinges on Acosta's ability to write fictions in space, what begins as a simple journey spreads quickly, piling up associations and experiences, new memories fashioned out of old ones, the magically found taking on long, peculiar lives. The horse legs purchased at a liquidation sale at a horse supply store in Dijon find a brother lingering in the neighbor's backyard grass, seen out of his kitchen window in Echo Park.

But these items found and often re-purposed compose what Acosta has called an "aesthetics of resourcefulness." This poetic draws not only from the picking up of ideas and notions from space, but also from the items at hand. Shoe-boxes stack into igloos and chandeliers and ancient wells, collected bottle caps become the bells on pentagonal tambourines, Paris itself becomes a site to relive dreams of Nerval in supernatural reverie, masked adventures as poetical heroes, and spinning snapshots of sites designated by a psychic where a ghost named Nadja could be found.

Rather than have a call-and-response of preconceived questions, I went tromping through Los Angeles with Acosta to sites that we framed to each as questions. One place associated with another. Acosta and I went field-tripping, our responses and the frame of our conversation tried to stay true to his work, referential and surreal, intuitive and literary, sometimes beautifully and hilariously absurd, always drawing from the inhabited environments.

Five locations were chosen. The first by Scoli, the second by myself. etc. Though a tape recorder was taken along the various field trips, it was used more to record ambiance than conversation.

- Andrew Berardini

The responses to these places are less driven by any motivation to explicate as by an attempt to collaborate with Scoli, to reform the interview into a form more responsive to his practice as an artist.

Site #1

Dream Center

2301 Bellevue Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90026-4017

Distance from Scoli's studio walking: .5 miles



Caption: Dream Center, Echo Park, Los Angeles, CA.

Scoli Acosta: As far as I know, I haven't been here since I was born. It used to be called The Queen of Angels.

It seems self-centered to start here but I see it every morning from my bathroom window after 14 years of traveling, and it's become ominous and beautiful. It seemed natural to begin here, and we can walk.

Andrew Berardini: I love this idea of a Dream Center, especially in an old hospital. I know that it's actual function is something with which I'm pretty uncomfortable: the Angelus Temple gang and its function as a evangelical organization spreading a pretty toxic version of Christianity (though somewhat tempered by some pretty decent charity work). But if I ignore the evangelical aspect of it and think about the endless hallways teeming with construction workers, the odd addition of the Ludwig Geerstocker's abstractions poster hanging on waffle-board in that workman's hallway. And then as we traveled up through the guts of the building, the brick walls and empty rooms, the strange views of the 101 freeway, and then to connect back to its older purpose, a place to be born or to die (or for many hopefully to recover in this medical sanctuary), the dreams of the Dream Center become something much stranger and more poetic.

I wonder what the Dream Center could be, a place to record and archive dreams, a place to make dreams, or like the Big Friendly Giant in Roald Dahl's book BFG, maybe it is the house of a giant who goes to the land where Dreams are born to capture the nightmares to keep them away from children and the beautiful dreams so that he can travel through the night with his long horn to blow the best ones into the rooms of children. Even this idea of dreams being something alive is beautiful and intriguing to me, and I wish the Dream Center was devoted to studying these, an academic organization devoted to the scholarship of the poetical and weird creatures that are dreams. But then again, the Freudians always piss me off with how doctrinaire they can be about the nature of dreams.

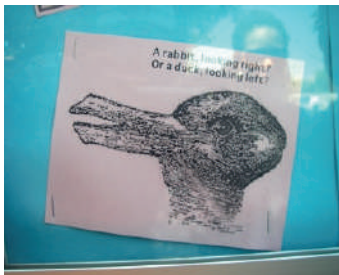
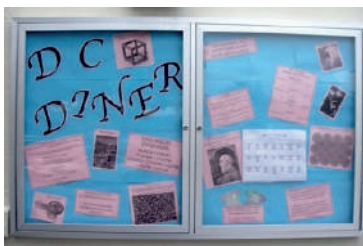
I think artists are better at dealing with dreams than doctors.



Caption: Scoli Acosta, *Dream Center Bus Maquette* (Proposal for trans-Australian journey called Endless Slumber), 2004, VW model, sugar crystals. Courtesy of the artist.

SA: Men in hard hats on multiple floors framing space with steel beams and holding up portions of a connected future functioning ventilation system.

AB: Hmmm, the guts of the building. The workmen giving it some guts, making it alive.



Caption: Bulletin Board for the Dream Center Diner.

SA: A giant bellows, breathing.

I've made a bellows out of the pages of a book.

One of my favorite stories from Classical mythology is called the Harpyon Birds

One of my favorite stories from classical mythology is called the Rainbow Bird.

In it there is the meeting of Iris and Somnus. Iris like Mercury is a messenger of the gods yet she traverses the sky in a rainbow cloak.

She meets with Somnus the god of sleep.

Iris puts on her robe of many colors, and tingeing the sky with her bow, seeks the palace of the King of Sleep. Near the Cimmerian country, a mountain cave is the abode of the dull god Somnus. Here Phœbus dares not come, either rising, at midday, or setting. Clouds and shadows are exhaled from the ground, and the light glimmers faintly. The bird of dawning, with crested head, never there calls aloud to Aurora, nor watchful dog, nor more sagacious goose disturbs the silence. No wild beast, nor cattle, nor branch moved with the wind, nor sound of human conversation, breaks the stillness. Silence reigns there; but from the bottom of the rock the River Lethe flows, and by its murmur invites to sleep. Poppies grow abundantly before the door of the cave, and other herbs, from whose juices Night collects slumbers, which she scatters over the darkened earth. There is no gate to the mansion, to creak on its hinges, nor any watchman; but in the midst a couch of black ebony, adorned with black plumes and black curtains. There the god reclines, his limbs relaxed with sleep. Around him lie dreams, resembling all various forms, as many as the harvest bears stalks, or the forest leaves, or the seashore sand grains.

As soon as the goddess entered and brushed away the dreams that hovered around her, her brightness lit up all the cave. The god, scarce opening his eyes, and ever and anon dropping his beard upon his breast, at last shook himself free from himself, and leaning on his arm, inquired her errand,—for he knew who she was.

"... shook himself free from himself ..."

You can read the full story [here](#).

AB: Literature has played some strong role in both our lives. One of my favorite sayings about fiction, that when it's at its best its like dreaming with your eyes open. The function of dreams is one that I feel is actually a better governing principle of modern life than any social agenda or policy, any system of morals or ethics, though these have their importance too in their own way. Though logic always follows, the source is always somewhat irrational. And even when logic follows our decisions, illogic, absurdity, can re-enter.

Literature for me (and perhaps psychedelic drugs to a certain extent) have always been a way to break through the surface layer of expectations and tradition to find the pulsating visions of what really drives the practice of everyday life. I remember in CS Lewis' [The Silver Chair](#) (I don't mean to keep mentioning children's books, but what the hell), the adventurers have an opportunity to go deep into the bowels of the earth, deeper than any surface dweller had ever gone before, to a land where diamonds and rubies were like fruit that grew on trees, they could be squeezed for the juice. The precious stones and jewels we see at the surface are really deadened, stale shadows of what grows fresh in the abysses of the earth. A Dream Center should be like that place, or where the Greeks built the Temple at Delphi, where the seers lived. They called it the Omphalos, which means bellybutton. They thought that this place was the bellybutton of the Earth, Gaia, the mother of all the gods, and had a special power because of it.

SA: Andrew you're so passionate. You sound like Breton but you'd have to throw yourself out of Surrealism because of the reference to drugs, but I think you could do that. The "practice of everyday life" is a beautiful phrase and bestows the necessary gravity on the aphorism by Heroclitus, "The sun is new everyday." Your description of dreams, doctors, and Delphi makes me think of Asclepius. The wounded, gathering in Asclepian temples to sleep where, Asclepius, in the form of a snake would crawl over and among them healing their ailments.

AB: Both healing and dreaming at the same time, the Asclepian serpent. The former real function of the Our Lady Queen of Angels Hospital meets our poetic repurposing of the name and site of the new Dream Center. There's something funny about the Dream Center, ostensibly a Christian evangelical/charitable organization being the site for these fantasies and discursive feelings that we've given to it. I feel like our conversation needs the same final apologia that comes at the end of Shakespeare's *Midsummer's Night's Dream*, delivered by the tricky woodsprite Puck:

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,

....

Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long....

It all becomes okay in its way if it's just a dream, perhaps life is just a dream, and the dangers of dreams are as real as the dangers of reality (poison, lightning, car accidents, etc). I've seen people who have sickly dreams, they might as well have an influenza, some die of their despair.

But then again, we managed to populate the ostensibly Christian Dream Center with pagans and poets. This gives me inordinate joy.

SA: I've been asking people lately if there is an average size for the length of a lightning rod.

I haven't looked it up yet and no one has a clue.

Site #2

The Little Chapel in Clifton's Cafeteria "Brookdale"

648 South Broadway Los Angeles, CA 90014-1807

Distance from Dream Center: 3 miles





The Parable of the Sequoia

SA: Alright maybe I'll eat my pudding and try to record it (The Parable of the Sequoia). I've never been in that tiny discovery. They don't let you latch the door shut anymore though. They try to keep it, uh...Oh Oh Andrew I think this is regular pudding.

AB: It said tapioca.

SA: This is regular pudding.

AB: Sorry.

SA: It's still good. I don't like sweets very much but I really like tapioca pudding. It's one of the few desserts I look forward to. Mmm.Mmmm.

AB: It's one of my favorite places in Los Angeles. This bear here has been catching that same fish for like 70 years.

SA: Who brought you here first?

AB: I don't remember. Maybe my friend Jared. I was a grown-up by then though.

SA: Hmmm. There used to be one further out in the suburbs, in West Covina.

AB: A Clifton's?

SA: Mhmm. I lived near there at one point with my mom. When was this built anyway?

AB: 30s.

SA: It's funny that it has this huge religious bent.

AB: Is it huge?

SA: This neon cross is pretty, um, well, it's not huge.

AB: It speaks of a time when everyone was Christian and people associated nature with meditation.

SA: 30s, 30s what was happening?

AB: The Great Depression. Apparently Clifton's didn't used to charge if you couldn't pay.

SA: Huh. That's a religious bent.

AB: Tis. But I wish there was something that made people do that without religion. "We can afford to serve this many people for free a day".

SA: Hmm.. When did Thoreau die?

AB: 1870s, 60s? 60s.

SA: Are you interested in those guys at all? Emerson, Thoreau?

AB: A lot actually. I wrote a whole essay on this artist saying that he was the heir of Thoreau. Who was a friend and student of Emerson, but he radicalized it a lot.

SA: Maybe we should read something by Emerson on Meighthday. Emerson for Meighthday would be perfect because they say he was a fantastic reader and his work was meant to be read aloud. What would be good to read by Emerson? I would prefer Emerson.

AB: Thoreau is a little bit more dangerous. Emerson is a little more dreamy.

SA: I think that's why I prefer him.

AB: There are some really beautiful excerpts of Walden. The chapters are really short and peppy.

SA: So you would say to read something by Thoreau rather than Emerson?

AB: Yeah.

SA: I have a collection of Emerson's writing somewhere. Do we have to run?

AB: We probably should. Let's go stand in the booth together again real quick though.



Caption: Peter Zumthor's Bruder Klaus Chapel, 2007



Site #3

Santa Monica Pier

200 Santa Monica Pier, Santa Monica, CA 90401-3126

Distance from Clifton's: 15.2 miles



Caption: Virginie Jacquet Sunset July 20th, 2009

SA: Nature as meditation. Our conversation at Clifton's reminded me about the photo I wrote about for the One Image One Minute event for X-TRA magazine.

The photo was taken by a friend of mine from France named Virginie Jacquet on the Santa Monica pier at Sunset on July 20th, 2009.

The idea for the column and the event came from a series of works Agnes Varda made for French television. Here is a video of the first Pentagonal Monochrome (tambourine) being played in front of several murals featured in her film "murmur" which she made in Los Angeles in 1982. A friend of mine in Paris called the monochromes, "California Paintings."

AB: We begin with religion and come to ideal, the unofficial state religion of Southern California. But in a weird way, both are grounded in fulsome images. Like the fresh rubies of the underworld in *The Silver Chair*. Poets, and perhaps my favorite artists, deal in images that are full to bursting with ambiguities, but not ambiguous like a thin abstraction, like "love" or "friendship," but precise as a stiletto dagger that when used correctly can balance life and death on its fine point. That's a darker turn to your Golden State pierside visions. But an ideal, a religion, a dream, there are ways of dealing with the dangers and turmoils of existence. An ideal isn't ever real in the end, just like Utopia by definition is "no place," an ideal is a dream, a vision, of what can be, not necessarily what is. Walking along the pier, you could have seen the stinking fish guts from unclean fisherman and the tawdriness of this touristic place where everything is for sale and beat hustlers prowl the crowd for the dregs of opportunity, but you saw and experienced something else, a dream, an ideal.

SA: I thought we started with life and dreams and I'm not a writer but I wrote "...of an imagined ideal..." which I felt had the question of the ideal buried in it already. It WAS a great moment though. Timeless and ideal, a good dream.

The image of someone buying a postcard to send back home of the exact same sunset surrounded by the scent of tawdry fish guts while having their pocket picked also has a sad beauty to it.

Can ideals, religions, or dreams also be the dangers and turmoils of existence?

Bringing idea(l)s to materials is similar to what you said about utopia and I think that's one of the great things about making art and perhaps about being human.

We think so much of ourselves and still slip on the sidewalk and spill our cups of Styrofoam coffee on the street. Or maybe that's just me.

Site #4

Luigi's Fountains Pottery and Gardenware

5630 San Fernando Road

Glendale, CA 91202-2103

Distance from the Santa Monica Pier: 24.4 miles



[the sound of dozens of babbling fountains, water talking to itself, overlaps the thrust and sputter of the 134 freeway not more than a hundred yards away]

AB: I chose for us to come here because I was thinking about ideals and objects, dreams and kitsch, the permeability between

the imagined and the real. I couldn't help but remember an outdoor garden sculpture shop near my house growing up. It was on a long, lonely stretch of road between the housing tract that I lived in and the older part of the city, built at the turn of the twentieth century nearer the beach. It was surrounded by horse trails and pumpjacks, but is now ringed by a much newer housing development built in the last ten years. My mother would take us along with her sometimes and we would play games, running around the nondenominational statuary, which is true here at Luigi's on a smaller scale (though scale in childhood memories is a tricky thing to gauge).

Virgin Marys next to Buddhas next to Tikis next to winged pigs next to to pucci angels next to Mexican strawberry pots next to a white stone replica of Botticelli's Venus with a broken nose next to families of squirrels next to contemplative gargoyles next to grave-faced lawn jockeys.

Now that I'm thinking, and I keep returning to children's books, perhaps because of the one that you're working on with Joseph Mosconi, in lots of fairy tales and modern takes on ancient myths, like Lewis' The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, the evil witch's courtyard is filled with petrified creatures, satyrs and men and talking animals, made stone by a diabolical spell, cursed for their noncompliance with the witch's evil wiles. Though I know here that these are all made in factories by workers with no dreams of these creatures coming to life, for me, I feel wistful memories of my childhood, where the magic of them coming out of their stony slumbers was still quite possible.

SA: Los Angeles is full of childhood landmarks for me and the permeability between the imagined and the real is a line we're probably both walking, often. Pushing the poetics of the serendipitous and the quotidian.

Maybe we shouldn't underestimate the dreams of anyone.

Remember asking the current owner, Luigi's grandson, (they've been there since 1946) what the best thing about what he did there was and he said "The people I meet."

I think we both blushed.

Beautiful.

You've mentioned how the world of art is one of the few places where we're allowed as adults to explore the permeability of the imaginary and the real and the imaginary sometimes gets the best of me.

The book I've been working on with Joseph is just about finished after about two years. It's been great to collaborate. The sentences he's given me are like crossword puzzles with no grid and no fixed answer but a square page bisected. "As Above, So Below", one of the basic tenets of magic, and while working on the book I realized it's the answer to give when someone asks if the glass is half full or half empty.

"Oh, the dolorous husky remotely touched some watchful iguanadon."



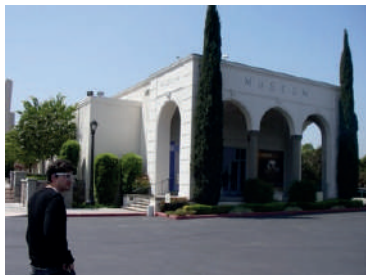
Caption: Excerpted Image from Joseph Mosconi and Scoli Acosta's book As Above, So Below. Courtesy of the artists.

Site #5

Forest Lawn Memorial Park and Mortuary Museum

1712 South Glendale Avenue, Glendale, CA 91205

Distance from Luigi's: 2.8 miles



SA: My dad lives down San Fernando Road a bit so I've been passing this place forever. They had an exhibition here not too long ago of artwork from the Braille Institute. Art of the Blind in the Cemetery Museum. I was enthralled and curious and really wanted to make it an event, so I decided I would try to make it a date. I gathered my courage and was able to ask three different women over a period of a couple of weeks and the third finally agreed.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT. I AM SO GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HELP AND FOR YOUR KINDNESS.

The end of our last conversation on the phone before the date went something like this.

Her: Okay, so I'll meet you at the museum at 2 o'clock.

Me: (a little creeped out) Are you sure you want to meet at the museum and not somewhere else beforehand?

Her: No, it's fine.

Me: Okay, but please, if we meet at the museum, please, please don't stand me up.

Her: No, that would be sad.

Me: Yeah, sad.

Sunday at 1:20 I was still bumbling around my apartment and realized how incredible this was and thought to myself at one moment that I'd really found "the one." I had to bring flowers. No real time to buy flowers and flowers to the cemetery? Hmm, maybe not. But still something pushed me forward with this thought and I saw a bunch of thick paper lilies I'd made and thought because they had been handmade it was OK.

So I gathered myself and got in my car and drove there with my lily bouquet passenger. I knew the route so didn't stop at the information booth and wound myself to the top of the cemetery hill. No one was around. I parked, stepped out, felt the breeze. 2 o'clock came and nothing happened. By 2:30 it was getting sad and I was back in the car with the door open but perspiring. The phone finally rang. I was curt. Something about a friend's house in Hollywood... Let me know how the show is... Whatever. We hung up.

Let me know how the show is? This was an event, not a show.

The worst had happened. Stood up at the cemetery.

I reluctantly locked up the car and opened the doors of the museum alone. The work seemed mostly assignment based. Lots of variations of the same theme. Some ceramic sculpture. There was a castle of tape that was made with various pieces of paper from various sources that was nice and probably about the size of a small lopsided dinner table.

Still, the worst had happened.

I don't remember much of the day after that but days pass and heartbreak subsides. I went to Mexico City for the week of the swine flu outbreak and returned potentially carrying swine flu and walked to a small market up the street for some groceries and as I rounded the corner, there she was.

I pointed at her accusingly but with a healthy distance because of the potential swine flu.

"You." I slowly growled.

"It was you. You stood me up at the cemetery."

She made sounds, her sunglasses bothered me. My mouth moved slowly and out came,

"At least I knew what to do with the flowers I brought you."



ArtSlant would like to thank Scolli Acosta for making this interview possible.

~Andrew Berardini, a writer living in Los Angeles.

ENTRETIEN avec ÉMILIE RENARD

by / par
Patrice Joly

13

Après *Monsieur Miroir*, l'exposition de la douzième édition du Prix Ricard – qui répond à un cahier des charges désormais bien identifié, celui de mettre en scène la dizaine d'artistes représentative de la dernière scène émergente en France – Émilie Renard, avec *Les Vagues*, s'immerge avec délices dans les rouleaux d'automne des ateliers du Frac des Pays de la Loire à Carquefou. Deux exercices très stylés aux antipodes l'un de l'autre.

02 — Tu as placé ces 24^e Ateliers internationaux du Frac des Pays de la Loire sous le signe de Virginia Woolf à qui tu as emprunté le titre d'un de ses romans les plus fameux, *Les Vagues*, pour le donner à l'exposition consécutive à la phase de résidence. Cet auteur culte jusque dans les années 1970 a longtemps symbolisé une écriture « mélancolique ». On l'a aussi associée, à tort ou à raison, à une certaine forme d'oppression psychologique à l'intérieur du couple... Cette Virginia Woolf-là ne te fait pas peur ?

E. R. — J'ai placé cette résidence avant tout sous le signe des *Vagues* en désignant le roman comme catalogue de l'exposition. J'ai choisi ce roman-là d'abord parce que sa structure narrative me permet une analogie simple entre la situation en jeu dans la fiction et celle de la résidence : six soliloques dans le roman, six artistes en résidence. J'aime assez cette relation très littérale au roman et cette base nous permet toute liberté vis-à-vis de ce qui devient pour nous, un catalogue. Virginia Woolf ne m'intéresse donc pas tellement pour sa biographie ni pour sa postérité mais plutôt en tant que narratrice, et là, je ne la trouve

pas tellement mélancolique ni opprimée, au contraire, je la trouve souvent assez distancée et drôle, je pense par exemple à certaines déclarations grandiloquentes de la biographe d'Orlando. C'est donc en relation à ses apparitions en tant que narratrice dans ce roman que l'analogie avec la situation réelle se poursuit : dans *Les Vagues*, elle est dans la position classique de la « narratrice omnisciente ». Mais elle est très économe de ses manifestations qu'elle limite à l'introduction des pensées intérieures des personnages, avec cette formule : « dit Rhoda », « dit Jinny » etc., en fait, elle passe les plats. Par ce retrait, elle marque son absence et les soliloques semblent par contraste, en prise directe sur la pensée des personnages. Elle s'accorde aussi une autre relation au texte, dans une voix encore plus distancée et désincarnée qui se confond même avec le décor, c'est celle des neuf interludes qui coupent net le flux continu des voix par des descriptions de paysages côtiers à la troisième personne, comme par un jeu de contrechamp paysager aux focus sur les personnages. Là, elle adopte un style sagement « fleuri », comme si elle nous faisait visiter une peinture de Gainsborough avec une steadycam : c'est très beau, mais répété neuf fois, ça devient presque ennuyeux... Je n'ai délibérément pas lu d'analyses littéraires de ce livre, mais j'imagine qu'elle devait s'amuser à user d'un style convenu. En même temps, il y a là quelque chose de dramatique, car les descriptions suivent le soleil de son lever à son coucher, ce qui est à la fois une métaphore très classique d'une vie à l'échelle d'un jour, mais qui apparaît aussi comme la poursuite méthodique d'une perte annoncée. C'est le

VIRGINIA WOOLF

The Waves, 1931.

Page de titre de l'édition

Penguin Books, 1951.

Collection des ouvrages et

conception graphique des

tampons : Marie Proyart.

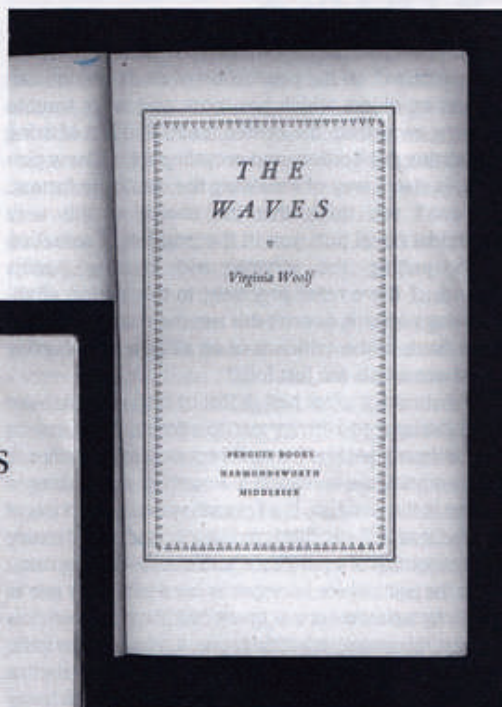
Title page of the Penguin Books

edition, 1951, stamped.

Collection of the French and English

editions, graphic design of the stamps:

Marie Proyart.



INTERVIEW

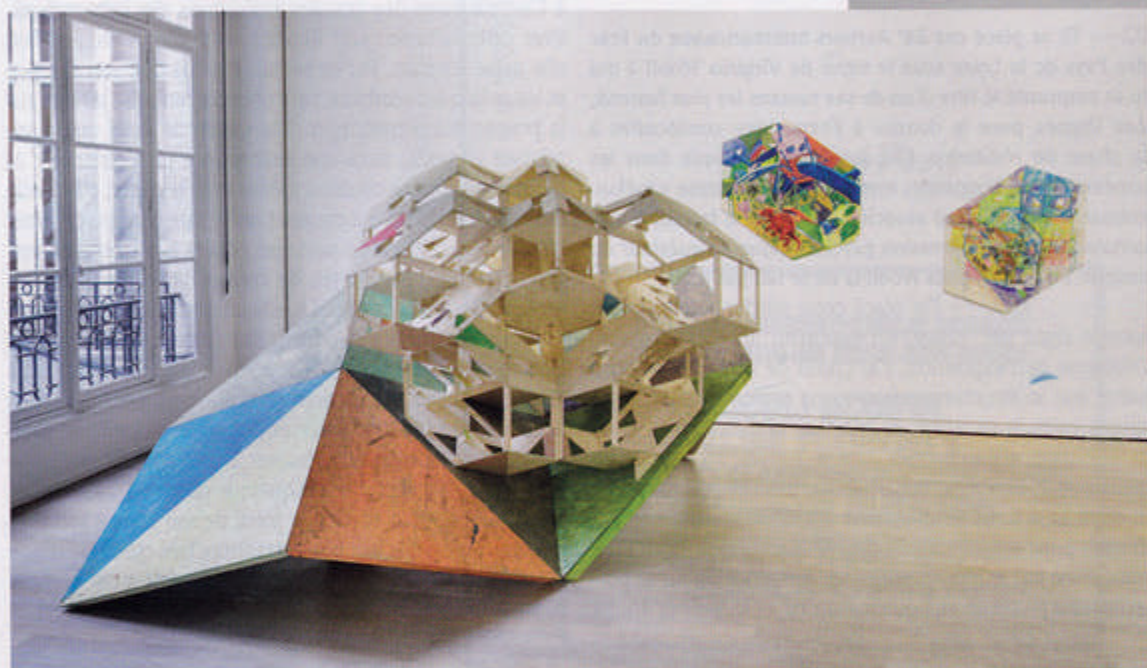
After *Monsieur Miroir* [*Mister Mirror*], the twelfth Prix Ricard exhibition—with its now clearly identified terms and conditions, which involve presenting a dozen or so artists representative of the latest art scene to emerge in France—Émilie Renard, with *Les Vagues* [*The Waves*], plunges with relish into the autumn rollers of the FRAC des Pays de la Loire workshops at Carquefou. Two highly stylized exercises, diametrically opposed to each other.

02—You've put this 24th Frac des Pays de la Loire International Workshop under the aegis of Virginia Woolf, from whom you've borrowed the title of one of her most famous novels, *The Waves*, for your exhibition following on from the residency phase. Up until the 1970s, this cult author long symbolized a "melancholic" form of writing. She has also been associated, rightly or wrongly, with a certain form of psychological oppression within the couple... Are you afraid of this particular Virginia Woolf?

E. R. — I put that residency above all under the aegis of *The Waves* by designating the novel to be the exhibition catalogue. I chose that particular novel first of all because its narrative structure permits me a simple analogy between the situation in question in the fiction and that of the residency: six soliloques in the novel, six artists in residence. I rather like this very literal relation to the novel, and this basis gives us every liberty in relation to what, for us, becomes a catalogue. So Virginia Woolf does not interest me that much for her biography or for her posterity, but rather as a narrator, and as such I don't find her

Monsieur Miroir

12^e prix de la Fondation d'entreprise Ricard
du 21 septembre au 6 novembre 2011
avec Neil Beloufa, Julien Bismuth,
Isabelle Cornaro, Benoît Maire, Mick Peter,
Soraya Rhofir, Ernesto Sartori, Jessica Warboys



particularly melancholic or oppressed. Quite to the contrary, I often find her rather remote and funny—I'm thinking for example of certain grandiloquent declarations in the biography of Orlando. So it's in relation to her appearances as a narrator in this novel that the analogy with the real situation is carried on: in *The Waves*, she is in the classic position of the "all-knowing narrator". But she is very economical with her appearances which she limits to introducing the inner thoughts of the characters, with this formula: "said Rhoda", "said Jinny", etc.—in fact she passes the buck. Through this withdrawal, she marks her absence and, in contrast, the soliloquies seem to be coming straight from the way the characters are thinking. In this way, she grants herself another relationship to the text, in an even more remote and disembodied voice which even blends with the décor—it is the voice of the nine interludes which abruptly cut the continuous flow of the voices by third person descriptions of coastal landscapes, as if through an interplay of reverse shot to the focus on the characters, using landscape. Here, she adopts a quietly "flowery" style, as if she were getting us to visit a Gainsborough painting with a Steadicam: it is very beautiful, but repeated nine times it becomes almost boring... I have intentionally not read any literary analyses of this book, but I imagine she must have had fun using a conventional style. At the same time, there is, in it, something dramatic, because the descriptions follow the sun from when it rises to when it sets, which is at once a very classical metaphor of a life on the scale of one day, but which also appears like the methodical pursuit of an announced loss. This is the passage of a time without object, like a memento mori without a skull. Were there melancholy somewhere in her writing, this is where it would be.

I really like the arrangement you introduce which "economizes" on the production of an exhibition catalogue, an object which has more and more trouble keeping away from the beaten track. The fact of using an existing publication, and recycling it for a new purpose, is also a way of renewing the catalogue format. But don't you think that the choice of this very pyramidal novel puts you in the position of someone who's pulling the strings, and moving pawns around...? If we refer, precisely, to this notion of all-knowing narrator, doesn't this run the risk of exposing one's flank to the criticism of an all-powerful curator for whom artists are just foils?

What matters to me here, is that by attributing the place of the catalogue to a literary text, to a fiction, it acquires, de facto, a descriptive function, and because it is in advance, it becomes predictive in relation to something that is about to happen in the world, or, in any event, we can expect this of it... As for myself, yes, that is precisely it: I put myself readily in a relationship of equivalence with the all-knowing narrator, to the point where I delegate to her a part of my role as curator by replacing her text by my critical commentary. It is true that this analogy is a slippery one, it risks being caricatural and entailing one or two negative consequences, starting with Buren's famous attack on Szeemann, in his essay "Exposition d'une exposition", written in 1972 for Documenta 5, where he observes: "It is the exhibition which imposes itself as its own subject, and its own subject as work of art." Here, neither the exhibition's structure nor my curatorial proposition take precedence over what is on

ERNESTO SARTORI

Vue de l'exposition

Monsieur Miroir à la Fondation
d'entreprise Ricard.

Courtesy galerie Marcelle Alix,
Paris.

Photo: Florian Kleinfenn /
Fondation d'entreprise Ricard.

Monsieur Miroir, exhibition view,
Fondation d'entreprise Ricard.

passage d'un temps sans objet, comme un memento mori sans tête de mort. S'il y avait de la mélancolie quelque part dans son écriture, elle serait donc là.

J'aime bien le dispositif que tu mets en place qui fait « l'économie » de la réalisation d'un catalogue d'exposition, objet qui a de plus en plus de mal à sortir des sentiers battus. Le fait d'utiliser une publication existante, de la recycler en une nouvelle destination est aussi une manière de renouveler le format catalogue. Ne penses-tu cependant pas que le choix de ce roman très pyramidal te place dans la position de celui qui tire les ficelles, qui déplace ses pions... Si l'on se réfère justement à cette notion de narratrice omnisciente, n'est-ce pas risquer de prêter le flanc à la critique d'un curateur tout-puissant dont les artistes ne seraient que les faire-valoir ?

Ce qui m'importe ici, c'est qu'en attribuant la place du catalogue à un texte littéraire, à une fiction, il acquiert de fait une fonction descriptive, et parce qu'il est en avance, il devient prédictif vis-à-vis d'une chose qui va arriver dans le monde, ou en tout cas, on peut attendre cela de lui... Quant à moi, oui, c'est exactement ça : je me place volontiers dans un rapport d'équivalence avec la narratrice omnisciente au point que je lui délègue une part de mon rôle de curateur en substituant mon commentaire critique à son texte. C'est vrai que cette analogie est glissante, elle risque d'être caricaturale et traîne avec elle quelques casseroles à commencer par la fameuse attaque de Buren à Szeemann, dans son texte « Exposition d'une exposition », en 1972 pour la Documenta 5, où il écrit : « c'est

ENTRETIEN avec ÉMILIE RENARD

view in the show, nor do they act to the detriment of the artist's work. This somewhat rigid framework which, in the end, assigns a particular place to everyone, to myself and to the artist alike, offers us a great deal of freedom, more than it acts as a limitation, with everyone being assigned by this declaration of intent, at the same time as they pursue their own work, with or without the book in hand... Nor do I think that it particularly influences the reception of their work, because it acts essentially on peripheral factors, such as the catalogue and the title, which, at the same time, designate a very common object—waves. And then, once again, the narrator occupies either a minor place with these discreet “he says” and “she says”, or the distance of a crow's flight, without touching the characters. In the art register, this typified position of the “all-knowing curator”, of the person who stands back in a form of ideal neutrality and feigned anonymity, poses a problem for me. With this catalogue, I re-enact this posture, I even underline this form of contemplative and non-directive withdrawal. Claiming such a position may seem contradictory, but it seems appropriate to me, especially in a residency where the invited artists work without a net, and where, in this sense, the exhibition partly eludes me. Because in inviting me, Laurence Gateau is giving me a carte blanche which I am handing on to each one of the six artists.

This said, the fact that you mention the Buren-Szeemann polemic implies that you have this danger of being made use of in mind. As far as I'm concerned, it is more the idea of adapting a novel to the exhibi-

tion—the way we talk about adapting a novel to film—which titillates me, because whatever the curator does and prohibits him- or herself from wanting to do, he/she invariably wavers between the desire to respect works and artists and the wish to produce a work by him- or herself. When you introduced the scenario of the exhibition at Carquefou did you have in mind this issue of adaptation? Did this influence your choice of artists, not only in relation to their particular aesthetic qualities but also on the basis of other criteria?

I mention this attack by Buren in response to your remark about the “all-powerfulness” of the curator because it ushers in a lengthy misunderstanding about the power stakes between curator and artist, as if the curator were encroaching on the artist's territory. But I do not think that an assertive curatorial framework is a restriction for an artist; conversely, it can be for the public. Here, mine is clearly posited from the outset, everything is said in my letter of invitation to the artists, which is also the communiqué for the public. About the analogy on a structural (and not narrative) level, about the place I give myself, but nothing about the exhibition is played out in advance, everything remains to be done. And to avoid any misunderstanding, I do not put myself here in the place of Woolf herself, just as the six artists do not represent the six characters. I deal with the consequences of the book as a catalogue by postulating an analogy between the narrator and my position as curator, as well as between the continual flow of consciousness of the characters in the book and the continuous flow of the work of the artists in residence. So the book is not a narrative source for

JESSICA WARBOYS

Vue de l'exposition

Monsieur Miroir à la Fondation
d'entreprise Ricard.

Courtesy galerie Gaudel
de Stampa, Paris.

Photo: Florian Kleinfenn /

Fondation d'entreprise Ricard.

Monsieur Miroir, exhibition view,

Fondation d'entreprise Ricard.

l'exposition qui s'impose comme son propre sujet, et son propre sujet comme œuvre d'art. » Là, ni la structure de l'exposition ni ma proposition curatoriale ne priment sur ce qui s'y expose, ni n'agissent aux dépens du travail des artistes. Ce cadre assez rigide qui donne finalement une place caractérisée à chacun, à moi comme aux artistes, nous offre une grande liberté plus qu'il n'agit comme une contrainte, chacun étant assigné par cette déclaration d'intention, en même temps qu'il poursuit son travail, avec ou sans le livre à la main... Je ne crois pas non plus qu'il influence tellement la réception de leur travail puisqu'il agit essentiellement sur des éléments périphériques que sont le catalogue et le titre qui désignent en même temps un objet très commun, les vagues. Et puis encore une fois la narratrice occupe soit une place mineure avec ces discrets « dit-il », « dit-elle », soit la distance d'un vol d'oiseau, sans toucher aux personnages. Dans le registre de l'art, cette position caractérisée du « curateur omniscient », de celui qui se tiendrait en retrait dans une forme de neutralité idéale et d'anonymat feint, me pose problème. Avec ce catalogue, je rejoue cette posture, je surligne même cette forme de retrait contemplatif et non directif. Revendiquer cette position peut sembler contradictoire, mais elle me semble appropriée, surtout à une résidence où les artistes invités travaillent sans filet et où dans ce sens, l'exposition m'échappe en partie. Car en m'invitant, Laurence Gateau me donne une carte blanche que je redistribue à chacun des six artistes.

Cela dit, le fait que tu évoques la polémique Buren-Szeemann implique que tu aies ce danger d'instrumenta-

lisation à l'esprit. En ce qui me concerne, c'est plus l'idée de l'adaptation d'un roman à l'exposition – comme on parle d'adapter un roman au cinéma – qui me titille, car quoi qu'il fasse et qu'il se défende de vouloir faire, le curateur oscille toujours entre le désir de respecter les œuvres et les artistes et la volonté de faire œuvre lui-même. En mettant en place le scénario de l'exposition à Carquefou, as-tu eu présente à l'esprit cette question de l'adaptation? Cela a-t-il influencé le choix des artistes, non seulement en fonction de leurs qualités esthétiques propres mais aussi en fonction d'autres critères?

Je cite cette attaque de Buren en réponse à ta remarque sur la « toute-puissance » du curateur, parce qu'elle inaugure une longue méprise sur les enjeux de pouvoir entre curateur et artiste, comme si le curateur empiétait sur le territoire de l'artiste. Mais je ne crois pas qu'un cadre curatoriale affirmé soit une contrainte pour un artiste, par contre, il peut l'être pour le public. Là, le mien est clairement posé dès le départ, tout est dit dans ma lettre d'invitation aux artistes, qui est aussi le communiqué pour le public: de l'analogie sur un plan structurel (et non pas narratif), de la place que je m'accorde, mais rien de l'exposition n'est joué d'avance, tout reste à faire. Et pour éviter tout malentendu, je ne me mets pas ici à la place de Woolf herself, de même que les six artistes ne représentent pas les six personnages. Je tire les conséquences du livre comme catalogue en postulant une analogie entre le narrateur et ma position de curateur ainsi qu'entre le flux continu de conscience des personnages du livre et le flux continu du travail des artistes en



résidence. Le livre n'est donc pas une source narrative pour l'exposition ni pour des œuvres qui viendraient l'illustrer. Ceci dit, j'ai invité des artistes chez qui je vois un lien possible avec ce livre, de très près ou de très loin: Élise Florenty, Loreto Martínez Troncoso ou Stéphane Querrec ont tous les trois un usage de la parole où il est question du récit de soi comme d'un autre ou d'une autre chose, usant d'intermédiaires, acteurs, auteurs et mettant en scène une voix intérieure traversée par de multiples autres voix. D'ailleurs, chacun d'eux a puisé dans le texte de Woolf, par bribes, pour le déplacer sur son propre terrain. Jessica Warboys et Scolí Acosta procèdent plus par glissements sensibles d'un geste à une forme ou à une image, à un son, dans une forme d'attention à ce qui les entoure, à l'esprit d'un lieu. Chez Woolf, il y a cette confusion entre les états de l'âme et la sensation physique et immédiate du dehors. Clément Rodzielski joue, lui, avec des images aux statuts transitoires qui résistent à leur réification et peinent à exister dans le monde parce qu'elles ne remplissent jamais tout à fait le rôle qu'elles annoncent et qu'elles requièrent une suspension du jugement, du doute quand à leur nom. C'est aussi le caractère insaisissable de la pensée qui anime ce livre.

L'exposition à la Fondation Ricard, *Monsieur Miroir*, vient à peine de s'achever que commence celle du Frac. Comment passe-t-on de l'une à l'autre, y a-t-il une continuité entre les deux? S'agit-il de deux projets complètement différents même s'il semble que la littérature soit convoquée dans l'une comme dans l'autre?

ENTRETIEN avec ÉMILIE RENARD

the exhibition or for the works which will illustrate it. This said, I have invited artists in whom I see a possible link with this book either very near or very far: Elise Florenty, Loreto Martínez Troncoso, and Stéphane Querrec all have a way of using words where what is involved is the narrative of self and of another or another thing, using intermediaries, actors and authors, and presenting an inner voice traversed by many other different voices. What is more, each one of them has drawn from Woolf's writing, in snippets, in order to shift it to their own turf. Jessica Warboys and Scolí Acosta proceed more by way of perceptible shifts from a gesture to a form or to an image, to a sound, in a form of attentiveness to what is around them, to the spirit of a place. With Woolf, there is this confusion between moods and the physical and immediate sensation of the outside. Clément Rodzielski, for his part, plays with images with transitory statuses which withstand their reification and strive to exist in the world because they never altogether fulfill the role which they announce, and because they require a suspension of judgment and doubt, as far as their name is concerned. This is also the elusive character of the thinking that informs this book.

The exhibition at the Ricard Foundation, *Monsieur Miroir*, has no sooner closed than the one at the Frac is opening. How do you move from one to the next? Is there a continuity between the two? Is it a matter of two completely different projects, even if it would seem that literature is called upon in both of them?

There's practically nothing left of *Monsieur Miroir* in *The Waves*, except for Jessica Warboys! *Monsieur Miroir* is

Il ne reste quasiment rien de *Monsieur Miroir* dans *Les Vagues*, sauf Jessica Warboys! *Monsieur Miroir* n'est pas de la littérature, il est un personnage fictif, un objet personnifié et transitionnel qui remplit le rôle d'un Monsieur Loyal et ouvre sur une exposition qui, d'un point de vue curatoriale, s'est résumée pour moi à établir une liste d'artistes. *Monsieur Miroir* les montre donc tels quels, dans un pur reflet. Finalement, du point de vue de leurs contextes et processus d'élaboration, les deux expositions sont opposées. Avec *Monsieur Miroir*, j'ai pratiqué le b.a.-ba du curating: dans l'esprit d'une exposition pour un prix, avec cette condition qu'ils participent à la scène de l'art français, sans autre parti pris curatoriale que la subjectivité de mes choix; j'ai établi une liste d'artistes que j'ai limitée à huit, pour qu'ils puissent être représentés par un large ensemble d'œuvres récentes ou en cours. L'exposition résultait donc d'une simple addition, sans pensée globale, sans principe a priori. En fait, beaucoup de relations entre eux sont apparues avec l'agencement des œuvres dans l'espace. Mais j'avais refusé de les anticiper et surtout de thématiser sur une scène ou de cibler une quelconque tendance de l'art actuel. C'est pourquoi le catalogue de l'exposition est composé uniquement d'interviews, de paroles en prise directe, sans chapô synthétique et qu'à la place du traditionnel avant-propos du commissaire, j'ai opté pour une conversation avec Colette Barbier. Par contre, point commun entre *Les Vagues* et *Monsieur Miroir*, chacun des catalogues est une manière de différer l'analyse critique des œuvres, une chose que je ne me prive pas de faire lors de visites, lorsque que rien n'est encore couché sur le papier...

STÉPHANE QUERREC

Le vague au corps, 2010.

Vidéo.

SCOLÍ ACOSTA

Sunshine

Acrylique sur toile, bois,

colle à bois, fil, clous.

76.5 x 63 cm.

Courtesy de l'artiste et

de la galerie Laurent Godin.

ELISE FLORENTY

As a wave breaks, 2010.

Vidéo.

JESSICA WARBOYS

Marie de France, 2010.

Vidéo.

Courtesy galerie Gaudel de

Stampa, Paris.

Inside-Out - The Official Topshop Blog

Inside-Out - The Official Topshop Blog

ZOO ART FAIR

October 16, 2009





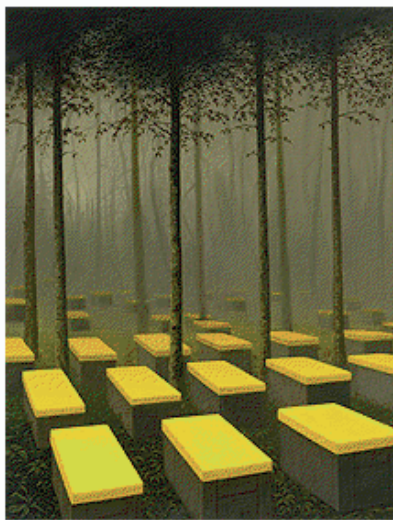
CITY BY CITY ART PULSE

London art fairs: user guide

C. DAVIES, J. MACFARTHING, L. ARCHIBALD, WGSN 12.10.09

With a bumper weekend of art fairs coming up in London, WGSN shares its top tips on how to get the most out of the packed schedule.

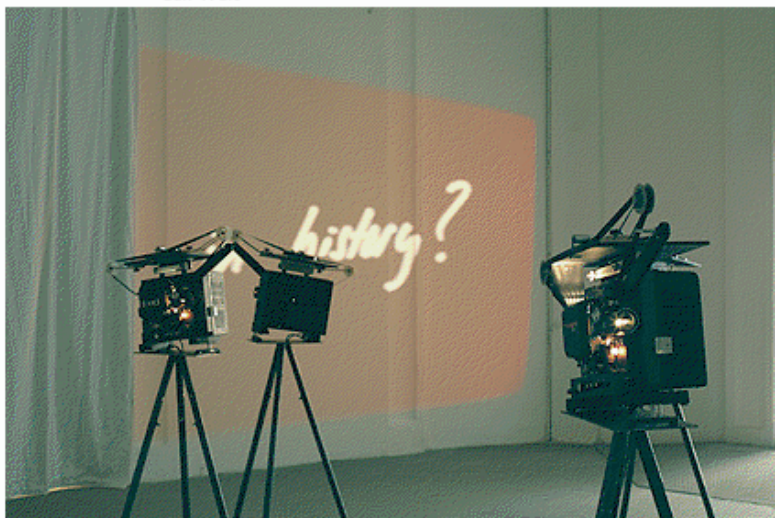
The fairs



John Stark, *Empire*, 2009 at The Future Can Wait



Gordon Cheung, *Endgame*, at The Future Can Wait



Rosa Barba, *Coro Spezzato: The Future Lasts One Day*, 2009 at Zoo



Scoli Acosta, *Finds and Fissures*, 2008 at Zoo

- **Zoo, Folgate Street, Shoreditch, October 16-19**

In a new multi-site East End location, this year **Zoo** has a more slimmed-down feel, with just 21 exhibiting galleries, alongside a programme of special performances, solo shows and one-off curated spaces.

In the past, Zoo has been **a good hunting ground for edgy, emerging new artists** and a keen favourite with eagle-eyed buyers. It'll be interesting to see how this year's shake-up will work, but the new location, in the heart of London's young art scene, provides ample opportunity for discovering what the area has to offer in terms of inspirational indie galleries and DIY street art. Pick up one of the specially commissioned **East End art maps** at the fair and get exploring.



Scolli Acosta, Bountiful, 2008 at Zoo



Alighiero Boetti, Fuso Ma Non, 1980 at Zoo

- **The Future Can Wait, The Old Truman Brewery, October 14-18**

Historically London has always been about nurturing new talent and last year we were impressed by the collection of artists brought together for **The Future Can Wait**, held at The Old Truman Brewery.

Be sure to head here to see what's preoccupying a new generation of emerging artists: look out for **Gordon Cheung's** The Journey, **John Stark's** The Nest of Putrefaction and **Alexis Milne's** Death Drive.

- **The Young Masters, The Old Truman Brewery, October 14-November 4**

Organised by The Cynthia Corbett Gallery in West London and curated by Constance Slaughter and Beth Colocci, **The Young Masters** draws together a collective of emerging and newly established artists who are inspired - whether abstractly or explicitly - by the **old masters**.

Multidisciplinary works reference either the technique or subject matter employed by the old masters, bringing deft skill back to the fore of the contemporary art scene.

ZOO
2009



16–19 OCTOBER

www.zooartenterprises.com

Opening Times:

12–8pm, Fri 16 – Sun 18 Oct

12–5pm, Mon 19 Oct

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SCOLI ACOSTA
Winner of the 2008
Champagne Perrier-Jouët Prize



Carbon Footprint, 2008 Exhibition View, Galerie Laurent Godin,
Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

Champagne Perrier-Jouët is delighted to host *Founded*, an exhibition at Zoo 2009 of new work by Scoli Acosta. In 2008 Acosta was selected as the best artist at Zoo from amongst 350 artists. He was awarded the Prize based on his recent achievements as well as his future potential. The independent selection panel of respected professionals included **Sir Norman Rosenthal**, former Exhibitions Secretary at the Royal Academy of Arts, 1977 – 2008, Times Arts Writer **Nancy Durrant**, artist **Mat Collishaw** and Director/ Curator of the Kunsthalle Zürich **Beatrix Ruf**.

Acosta has developed a highly personalized iconography that employs a nearly obsessional approach to the transformation of everyday objects and found materials that draw upon his immediate environment and years of travel across the US and abroad. For his solo show at Zoo 2009 Acosta will present a new project entitled *Founded*. Unlike the majority of recent exhibitions, which have focused on particular places, his primary focus for *Founded* is to pull together an accumulation of experiences and overlapping geographies within a very particular context.

The exhibition title comes from the historic road signs along Highway 1 on the California coastline in reference to the Missions founded there and plays with the notions of the temporary and the permanent; the incorrect past tense of the word ‘find’; and the literal meaning ‘to melt and pour into a mold’. Like the last scene in the film *Planet of the Apes*, Acosta often relies upon the appropriation of manmade forms toiled over by natural processes. The sculptures consist of found or variations of found objects or materials such as a “Sluice” which is a long, sloping trough with grooves on the bottom into which water is directed to separate gold from gravel or sand. *Levitating the Pentagon* is a series of multi-media works which began as a reference to the anti-Vietnam War March on the Pentagon in 1967 and continues with a string of associations surrounding the form of the pentagon. These include a now defunct mural; the 1970’s science series *Cosmos* where the pentagon features as a 3-dimensional horizontal, illuminated screen; and the current reality series *Survivorman* in which a pentagon functions as a lifeboat continuously needing to be replenished with air.

Represented by Galerie Laurent Godin in Paris, Scoli Acosta was born (1973), lives, and works in Los Angeles. Studies and travels include the Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri (1992-’94), The Ultimate Akademie, Cologne, Germany (1995-’97), Brooklyn, New York (1997-’99), and Paris, France (2000-’04). Recent solo exhibitions include Big Well Nada, Nada Art Fair, Miami, (2008); *Carbon Footprint*, Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris, (2008); *Bountiful*, LAXART, Los Angeles, (2008); *Day was to Fall as Night was to Break*, Daniel Reich Gallery, New York (2006). Recent group exhibitions include *Flower Power*, Villa Giulia, Verbania, Italy (2009); *Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement*, LACMA, Los Angeles, (2008, and traveling until 2010); *From and About Place: Art from Los Angeles*, CCA, Tel Aviv, Israel (2008). Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Coleccion Jumex, Mexico City; Rubell Family Collection, Miami; and FRAC Limousin, France.

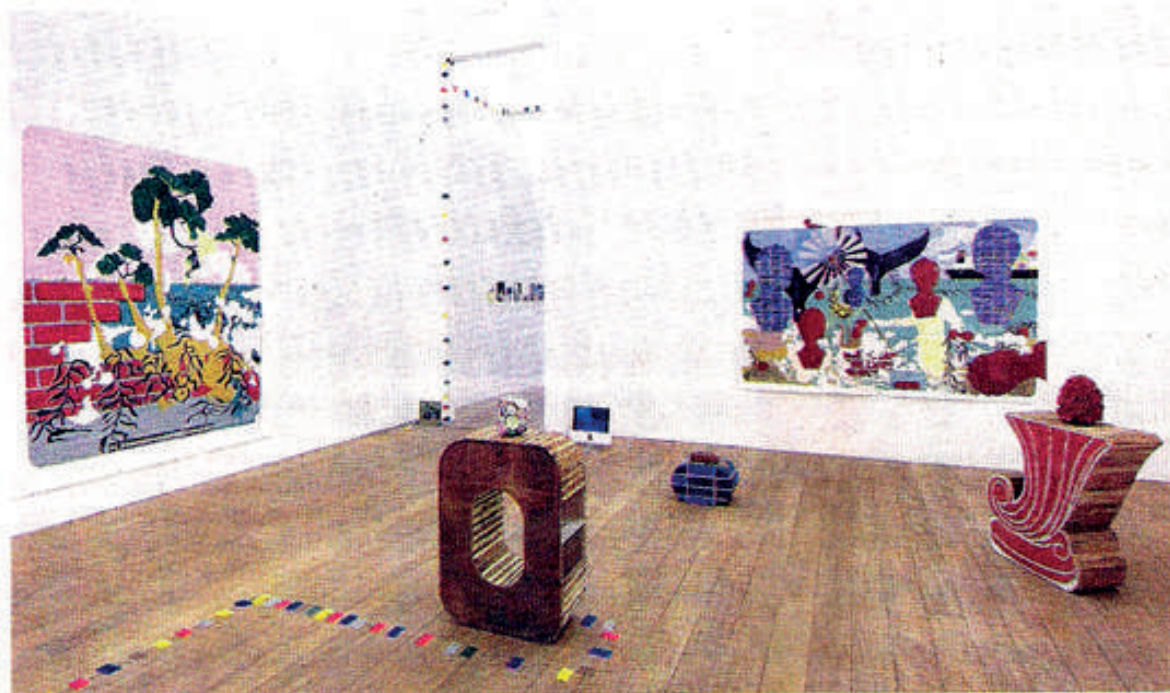
Le monde éphémère de Scolli Acosta

Première exposition parisienne du Californien qui travaille entre autres la poussière

L'écologie a son discours, ses aficionados, son impérieuse nécessité. Mais elle manque d'un regard, d'une conscience plastique : l'œuvre du jeune Américain Scolli Acosta pourrait être une étape dans le soulèvement de cette question au sein du monde de l'art. Nourri de culture française, ce Californien n'appartient pas à la mouvance des artistes qui tentent aujourd'hui d'éveiller les consciences politiques à cette problématique.

Mais, pour sa première exposition dans une galerie parisienne, il met en scène un micromonde où tout se recycle, pris dans une grande boucle où souffle une douce énergie. La moindre des modestes pièces présentées ici est née d'objets récupérés, usés, investis par le temps. Pour les lire, il faut comprendre le titre : « Empreinte carbone », qui dit la trace que tout homme laisse sur terre au fil de ses dépenses énergétiques.

Tout part d'une brique découverte sur une plage de Los Angeles : arrondie par les flots, elle est devenue galet, comme retournée à ses origines minérales. S'inspirant d'elle, l'artiste a conçu une série de sculptures et de toiles où vibrent les énergies du vent et du soleil. A partir de la poussière qu'il a obtenue en creusant ces épaves de pavés rouges, il a sculpté



« Carbon Footprint », l'exposition de Scolli Acosta à la galerie Laurent Godin. UWE WALTER

des cornes d'abondance. A partir de bois arrachés à des maisons californiennes, vieux de cent ans, il a construit des meubles. Dans l'un d'eux, en forme de O, un ventilateur souffle à perpétuité dans un harmonica : c'est lui, par son sifflement, qui donne son tempo vibratile à cette exposition. Comme pour souligner ces flux d'énergie, des Scotch de couleur viennent rythmer le parcours du fil électrique, de sa source jusqu'à la sculpture.

Sur une toile, un mur de brique est enlacé de formes vaporeuses, nuages et liserons sur ciel rose. Une autre, peinte en partie avec du sable, mêle des profils investis du motif de panneaux solaires, des queues de baleine, et de véritables algues, échouées là. Nourri au « hasard objectif » élevé par le surréaliste André Breton au rang d'art de vivre, Scolli Acosta lui donne par ses trouvailles recyclées une nouvelle valeur contemporaine. Elevé dans l'art de la perfor-

mance, porté par l'éducation de son grand-oncle Al Hansen à la poésie modeste développée au sein du mouvement Fluxus dans les années 1960, il travaille désormais l'éphémère comme une nouvelle éthique. ■

EMMANUELLE LEQUEUX

« Carbon Footprint », Scolli Acosta, galerie Laurent Godin, 5, rue du Grenier-Saint-Lazare, Paris-3^e. M^o Rambuteau. Tél. : 01-42-71-10-66. Du mardi au samedi, de 14 à 19 heures. Jusqu'au 5 avril.

Scoli Acosta

Par Patrice Joly

En 2002, Scoli Acosta réalise une installation ayant pour sujet la ville de Greenberg, Kansas, petite ville touristique qui a la particularité de posséder le plus grand puits du monde réalisé à la main (sic !) C'est aussi une ville où se situe un cratère météorique assez vaste. Il n'y a évidemment pas de relation de cause à effet entre ces deux phénomènes, l'une d'origine anthropique, l'autre naturelle. Toujours est-il que cinq ans après le travail de Scoli sur Greenberg, la ville est dévastée par une de ces tornades qui s'abattent régulièrement sur le *middle west* des États-Unis. Suite à cette catastrophe, les autorités de la ville décident de reconstruire la ville selon un programme « propre », c'est-à-dire l'équivalent du HQE français. Le nom donné à ce programme est *Greenberg Greentown* : évidemment, quand on est en charge de la refondation d'une ville qui s'appelle Greenberg, il est tentant de se servir du nom même de sa ville qui fournit un slogan sans qu'on ait à le chercher bien loin. Ce qui est intéressant ici concernant l'histoire et la pratique de Scoli c'est que son installation s'est vue recyclée par les autorités de la ville au titre d'une sorte d'« archéologie touristique », ratissant assez large jusqu'à englober des pratiques de jeunes artistes. Cet opportunisme ne dérange absolument pas Scoli Acosta, au contraire, cette histoire le ravit parce qu'elle condense à peu près toute la matière à la base de son travail : c'est-à-dire l'équivalent sur le mode métaphorique (via l'événementialité) du recyclage perpétuel qu'il applique à toute sorte de choses et pas seulement aux objets. Cette rencontre entre deux pratiques *a priori* éloignées a le mérite de pointer quelques considérations : là où le politique/gestionnaire s'autorise un « reconditionnement » des catastrophes naturelles dans une espèce de résilience portée à son comble (comment faire du fric

avec ce qui nous est tombé dessus), Scoli se réjouit de faire partie d'une histoire qui se déroule sans fin et qui, à chaque nouvelle génération, inclut une réévaluation des choses, des potentiels. Ainsi la petite cité qui a connu une époque pionnière il y a deux siècles, et dont l'économie reposait principalement sur l'artisanat ou la petite industrie s'est lentement transformée en une cité dont les principales ressources proviennent de cette double curiosité ; puis, une fois la catastrophe arrivée, elle rebondit vers une nouvelle vie, intégrant les nouvelles tendances de la communication qui incluent comme il se doit désormais ce label « vert ». Cet opportunisme n'en est pas un pour Scoli. Il correspond simplement à une transformation générale de la forme, quelle soit communicationnelle, naturelle ou esthétique. Il y a quelque chose en lui d'un Lavoisier : de même que le politique recycle en permanence les événements réels, leur faisant dériver et porter des significations qui ne sont pas forcément celles de l'historien ; chez Scoli, la forme ne se perd jamais, elle réapparaît

dans ses tableaux ou dans ses sculptures, dans ses constructions précaires et hétéroclites qui recomposent à chaque fois de véritables petits miracles d'équilibres... Ainsi ce petit muret en briques usé et raboté par les flots jusqu'à en faire une sculpture ready-made, mixte impossible de galet arrondi et de concrétion vernaculaire. Ainsi de ce motif de panneau solaire qui apparaît indifféremment en fond de ses tableaux ou vient recouvrir les moulages d'éléments de décorations et qui renvoie aussi bien à l'émblématique de l'énergie douce qu'à une réelle efficacité formelle : il n'y a pas de morale du motif chez Scoli, mais une simple constatation de l'évidence des choses et de leur lente imprégnation de l'« environnement », du paysage urbain, des consciences. Ce motif, il le traque, le suit et l'accompagne, se contentant d'arranger ses apparitions ou de les mixer incongrûment. Ainsi de cet ornement floral (*Solar Panel Floral Relief*, 2008) recouvert de son motif fétiche, encore et toujours le panneau solaire : l'usage de ce dernier provient autant du constat de sa prolifération que du désir de l'intégrer à ses œuvres, de s'en emparer et de le triturer à l'infini, d'en recouvrir ses autres pièces pour singer cette profusion, la dépasser. À l'instar de cette résidence qu'il fit à Moly-Sabata où il

passa deux mois à exhumer des petits objets enfouis dans le sol à l'aide d'un détecteur de métaux¹, Scoli se situe plus du côté de celui qui porte les choses à la lumière, leur redonne une nouvelle vie. Comme si les objets, les idées n'étaient pas allées au bout de leur potentiel, n'avaient pas tout donné. Ce qui l'intéresse dans le recyclage, c'est plus la notion de cycle et l'idée de mouvement perpétuel que celle qui la lie à un mouvement politique aux contours flous. Habitant L.A., Californie, il a vu la vague écolo s'abattre sur le pays telle un *twister*, soutenue

athlétiquement par son ex-Terminator de gouverneur. Mêlant en accéléré les bonnes intentions et les considérations démagogiques/spectaculaires, proximité d'Hollywood oblige. Dans cette ville de l'abondance où les signes du monde entier fusionnent depuis « toujours », la notion de recyclage est presque une insulte faite aux bonnes mœurs consuméristes, au mieux une mauvaise *joke*. Assez courageusement, il a tenté d'exister dans cette jungle visuelle en proposant son *Bountiful* sur le *billboard* du Laxart² : ode un brin schizophrénique à cette frénésie de la consommation, clin d'œil à l'émblème transhistorique de la corne, autre récurrence de son travail, symbole de toutes les richesses, de toutes les démesures.



Scoli Acosta, *Solar Panel Floral Relief*, 2008.
Vue de l'exposition *Carbon Footprint* Galerie Laurent Godin.
Photo Uwe Walter.

Scoli Acosta, *Carbon Footprint*, à la galerie Laurent Godin, Paris, du 23 février au 5 avril 2008.

¹Scoli Acosta a effectué une résidence d'artistes à Moly Sabata, Sablons (Isère), Fondation Albert Gleizes en 2001 avec Laurent Chambert, Philippe Durand
²*Bountiful*, intervention sur le panneau d'affichage du Laxart, Los Angeles, du 19 janvier au 1^{er} mars 2008.

Below // Receptionism, 2003

Performance and installation, Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts, Lyon, France // courtesy of the artist and Daniel Reich Gallery, New York



Scoli Acosta

Aimee Chang

Left // . . . *Day Was to Fall as Night Was to Break . . .*, 2006 // Installation view, Daniel Reich Gallery, New York // courtesy of the artist and Daniel Reich Gallery, New York //

Scoli Acosta's installations—which include, among other things, drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures, lights, video, and sound—are an outgrowth of his work as a performance artist in Paris from 1999 to 2004. Originally planning a short, discrete homage to the nineteenth-century French author and wanderer Gérard de Nerval, Acosta ended up following his interest in the writer for three years, completing a number of Nerval-related projects in the process. His lack of fluency in French at the beginning of his sojourn “left so much imaginary space,”¹ and the resulting body of work has a mystical, dreamlike quality, influenced by Nerval's insanity and by surrealism. The final body of work

Fantasy Verité

Inserting the terms *fantasy*, *California*, and *politics* into a Google search brought up a site for California secession, a dream called "just the blue of us."² This dream of a California republic harks back to the earliest ideas of California as utopia, but it is also an indicator of the extreme bifurcation of this country. While the red state/blue state polarity deepens, artists find numerous ways to express political dissent. After all, fantasy and politics commingle in California in myriad formations. Just think of the curious Californian figures who shape our views of politics and popular culture: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Gore Vidal, Arianna Huffington, Rob Reiner, and even the multicultural cast of *Lost*.³

A number of artists represented in the show are proving that the terrain of fantasy and the social and political realms are not mutually exclusive. As exhibitions like the 2006 *Whitney Biennial* and *Uncertain States of America* have shown, contemporary artists in the United States are agitated by the political climate and responding to it in both traditional and atypical ways.⁴ Science fiction

and fantasy have often provided the allegories with which to critique power structures and to take dark political scenarios to extreme conclusions. Fantasy verité gets at the free exchange between ways of shaping stories and ways of shaping objects. In some ways, the artists discussed here abuse the boundaries between fantastic narrative conventions and quasi-scientific ways of ordering knowledge. Sociological, anthropological, and photojournalistic traditions are used in concert with the absurd, profane, and grotesque.

The mix of political rage and flights of fancy that permeates the work of performance collective My Barbarian is typical of fantasy verité artists. Its core members—Malik Gaines, Jade Gordon, and Alexandro Segade—freely sample the history of performance art, twentieth-century music, and agitprop to create a genre that they call "show-core," a combination of mainstream show tunes and hardcore, an invocation of a more demonic energy in rock and punk. The subject matter of their performance scripts reflects their wide-ranging interests: Arthurian legends, Disneyana, class warfare, Bob Fosse, and ecotourism through time travel.

Nicolau Vergueiro invests materials with magical qualities while excavating images and icons from U.S. and Brazilian popular culture. He choreographs extreme polarities within his work—high and low references, hard and soft materials. Equally interested in confluences of extremes, Pearl C. Hsiung makes paintings and installations that seem to reflect the instability of California's psychic and physical landscapes. Her gurgling, erupting geological forms provoke inescapable associations with the most abject of human experiences. Eschewing traditional notions of landscape as a locus of the sublime and transcendental, Hsiung's works instead suggest the sexiness and absurdity of the wild gone wild.

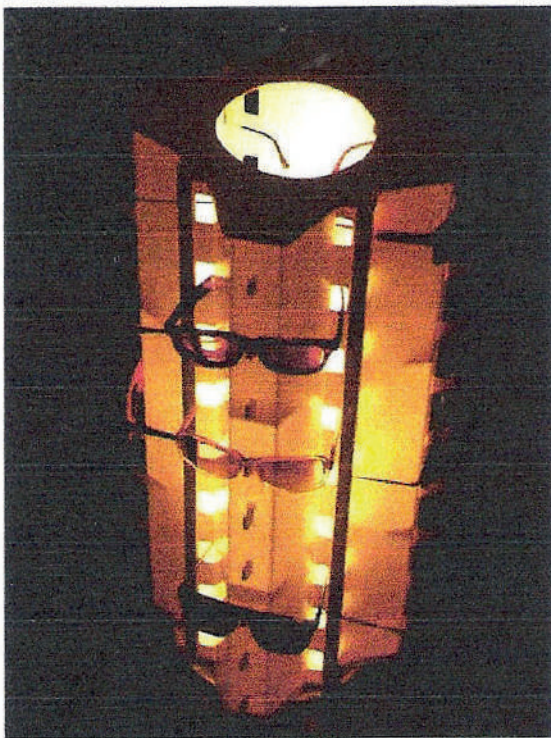
The installations and drawings of Scoll Acosta conflate dreamscapes with historically resonant landscapes, from Parisian monuments to the Badlands of South Dakota. A recent installation at Daniel Reich Gallery took Terrence Malick's film *Badlands* (1973) as the starting point in an excursion that involved Maxfield Parrish's *Daybreak* (a print of which appears in the film), a moonshine distillery, and an altered clip from the film that meditates on the eyes of Sissy Spacek. Acosta's work falls in that twilight space somewhere

between the verité aesthetic of Malick and the proto-psychedelic hues of Parrish.

Expanding narrative cinematic codes into the gallery, Marie Jager overlays literary and cinematic references onto real locations, and since her move to Los Angeles in 2000, she has been especially interested in using the city as the site of her reimaginings of early science fiction narratives. Jager's most recent project adapts the 1901 science fiction novel *The Purple Cloud* by British writer M. P. Shiel, relocating this "last man" narrative to the Southland. Guided by a similar interest in materializing fictive worlds, Andy Alexander has reworked minimalist objects into science fiction props. Think of the resemblance of the monolith from Stanley Kubrick's *2001* to John McCracken's planks, and then enter the space of Alexander's works. His drawings of architectural forms with mechanized entrails have provided a new way to convey the seemingly unbounded arena of fantasy yet also relate to the artist's interests in the themed environments and scripted spaces that play an increasingly large part in our daily experience.

Brian Fahlstrom's recent paintings are fantastic, dramatic, and surreal, exuding an internal energy propelled by swirling gestures, intense colors, and sinuous lines. Hovering between abstraction and representation, his pastoral pastiches recall aspects of Renaissance painting, Japanese woodblocks, and the late work of Willem de Kooning. Fahlstrom's dreamlike paintings evoke an ambiguous, unconscious sense of place as they consciously comment on the process and history of painting.

Shana Lutker's ongoing projects (involving drawings, bookmaking, and sculptures) take the methodologies of the archive and apply them to dream logic. While her use of dream material allies her with fellow L.A. artist Jim Shaw, Lutker's approach is to find exacting ways to collate and disseminate this content. While tracking the unconscious, her diaristic narrations comment on the blurring of fact and fiction in the media, on the Internet, and at the highest levels of government.



Scoll Acosta // . . . *Day Was to Fall as Night Was to Break* . . . , 2006 (detail)//installation view, Daniel Reich Gallery, New York//courtesy of the artist and Daniel Reich Gallery, New York//



The Sun Is a Star,
2004//graphite on
paper//11 5/8 x 8 1/4
in.//courtesy of the
artist and Daniel Reich
Gallery, New York//



Owl Explosion, 2004//
acrylic, watercolor, and
graphite on paper//11
5/8 x 8 1/4 in.//
courtesy of the artist
and Daniel Reich Gallery,
New York//

included photographs, drawings, sculptures, and perhaps most comprehensively, a comic opera with six actors and elaborate costumes and set. Acosta describes the work as "a net of relationships around [Nerval]. What begins as an academic study is rendered poetically utilizing minute historical liaisons and layering them with my own evolving visual vocabulary, the mechanics of low technology, and music."²

Newer works have continued to follow this model. A recent multimedia installation, *Big Well* (2005), focused on a roadside attraction in Kansas featuring "the world's largest hand-dug well," and a new installation will explore Terrence Malick's 1973 cult classic film *Badlands*. *Sissyeyes* (2005–6), a video from the latter body of work, shows Sissy Spacek running ahead and turning to look at us. The soft, static-y soundtrack is taken from a recording made by the Cassini spacecraft of the impact of previously unknown dirt between the rings of Saturn, alluding to Acosta's interest in stars and outer space. This video, like many of his drawings, is framed by a "sunglass or nightshade framework" that forces the viewer to literally look through the eyes of the artist.

Night Flower (There are moons), 2004//
watercolor, tempera,
graphite, and acrylic on
paper//36 x 24 in.//
courtesy of the artist
and Daniel Reich Gallery,
New York//



Performance still from *Piquillo ou le Rêve de Mr. Hulule*, 2002//Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers, Aubervilliers, France//courtesy of the artist and Daniel Reich Gallery, New York//



Big Well, 2005//installation view, Liste Fair, Basel//courtesy of the artist and Daniel Reich Gallery, New York//



Showing a "perspective from inside the body," these viewfinders often present varied, multiperspective scenes in which our own/the artists' hands seem to play a part.³ Eyes and sight appear as repeating motifs in Acosta's work, from multiple drawings in which rays of light or floods of water emanate from the eyes to an early body of self-portraits made by tossing a camera into the air.

Like that of his peers Mindy Shapero and Lara Schmitzger, Acosta's art is handmade and low-tech. His installations feature photocopies, waves made from flip-flops, and papier-mâché sculptures. This quality accentuates Acosta's hallucinatory vision and the ties between his work and its idiosyncratic source material, from Nerval to the Americana of roadside attractions and *Badlands*.

Notes

1. Scoll Acosta, in Scoll Acosta, 2000–2003, Paris: A Deep Puddle & Piquillo ou le rêve de Mr Hulule ([Aubervilliers]: Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers; [Paris]: Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 2005), 123.
2. *Ibid.*, 7.
3. Scoll Acosta, conversation with the author, January 29, 2006.



▲ **Scoli Acosta** View of the performance realized on the occasion of the International Prize for Performance / Veduta della performance realizzata in occasione del Premio Internazionale della Performance, 2007, Trento.

I left Los Angeles in 1991 after graduating from the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, and since then I have spent time in Seattle, Washington, Kansas City, Missouri, Chicago, Illinois, Brooklyn, New York, two years in Cologne, two more years in New York, and four years in Paris. Travelling comes naturally to me and my work reflects my environment. I try to adhere to an "aesthetics of resourcefulness," which I've come to think of as the recycling, refurbishing, readapting, and replicating of found and everyday objects. This decision is based in part on the necessity to reduce, reuse, and recycle (for the sake of the planet) and as well as on isolating and magnifying the poetics of the quotidian.

My work is visibly "handmade" and highlights my interest in the mechanics of low-technology and how things are made.

Being influenced early on by literature and living in other countries has given me the sense that I am constructing a visual vocabulary which I am continually pulling from and recombining. These factors as well as an organic studio process give my work the quality of a disjointed narrative, or dream structure, which is further explored through my performative works which usually take place within installations. I am currently working on an installation that includes small pots made from bricks that have been rolled by the ocean, paintings, photocopies, drawings, a bench made from old slats of wood that will sound a continuous drone by using a fan and harmonica in its interior, and some short videos based in part on the ocean.

Scoli Acosta was born in 1973 in Los Angeles. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

O U V E R T U R E

SCOLI ACOSTA

ANNE MARTENS



Five years ago, Scoli Acosta went to Paris, intending to stay only long enough to perform a brief homage to the 19th-century symbolist writer Gérard de Nerval. He wanted to recreate the legend that Nerval had once walked a lobster along the Palais Royal. Instead, Acosta stayed four years, producing Nerval-inspired performances, installations and sculptures. A contemporary of Nerval described the writer's habit of wandering the streets of Paris, "lost in a state of supernatural reverie." While Nerval is no longer Acosta's primary inspiration, the description seems fitting for the daydream worlds he constructs.

Acosta now lives in Los Angeles, and his latest drawings, paintings and sculptures are inspired by two themes relating to the American Midwest: Badlands and Big Well. The projects represent metaphorical as well as real places. The catalyst for the first is the Terrence Malick film *Badlands* (1973), a story of young lovers on a killing spree through South Dakota. It's not the plot, but rather the film's qualities of dawn, dusk and wistful sadness that Acosta's art evokes. By referencing the region's bloody history and his own visit to the Badlands, his work transcends the movie's influence.

Despite the diversity of Acosta's subject matter and media, his art reflects a consistent,

personalized iconography. Hands often encroach upon landscapes, hinting at the physical and emotional states of a collective human body. Symbolic elements such as stars, flowers, gemstones or Silly Putty-like figures float in space to suggest "closing your eyes and seeing phosphores," as Acosta describes the effect. In addition, his drawings and paintings often share compositional constructs, such as a binocular shape filled with a landscape and floating elements, or paint drips that might connote a flow of tears, water, blood or words.

Acosta's latest creative springboard is the Big Well, "the world's largest hand-dug well" in Greensburg, Kansas. A masterpiece of pioneer engineering, the pit has always compelled tourists to toss things into its depths, which are periodically dredged up and presented in a gift shop next to a meteorite that was found nearby. Acosta's *Big Well*, an installation that includes a mural-sized painting, smaller works on paper, a video and sculptural objects, was recently shown at the Liste art fair in Basel. Recurring visual motifs leave interpretation open, such as overlapping spirals that read as ripples in water, energy fields or cobwebs. Large signage promoting the attraction plus a collection of souvenir-like objects — squished pennies, bottle caps and other artifacts attached to the paintings —

address how any locale can be manipulated to draw crowds. But there's also potential magic to such non-places, because so much depends upon the imagination. Acosta's interpretation infuses this one with mystery and beauty.

What's compelling about Acosta's latest work is it portrays America as a dark, fairytale place, evoking dueling thoughts of awe and trepidation. But the main thing is that he leaves room for viewers to imagine the universe as extensively as he does.

Anne Martens is an art critic based in Los Angeles.

Scoli Acosta was born in Los Angeles in 1973. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

Selected solo shows: 2005: Daniel Reich Gallery (in November); Daniel Reich, Liste art fair, Basel, 2003; Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts, Lyon, 2001; Public, Paris.

Selected group shows: 2005: "Follow Me a Fantasy," Arena 1 Gallery, Santa Monica. 2004: "California Earthquakes," Daniel Reich, New York. 2003: "Kulturhauptstadt," Ultimate Akademie, Cologne. 2002: "Promotion," Espace Paul Ricard, Paris; "Sans commune mesure," Centre National de la Photographie, Paris. 2001: "Moly-Sabata," Musée des Beaux Arts, Lyon; "Two Friends and So On," Marc Foxx, Los Angeles.

Big Well, 2005. View of the installation, mixed media. Courtesy of Daniel Reich Gallery, New York.



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