

2014

TOP TEN LISTS

NATIONAL MUSEUMS

By Peter Frank

1) Guggenheim Museum: "Italian Futurism, 1909-1944: Reconstructing the Universe"

Reconstructed the universe of one of art history's most misunderstood movements, revealing everything from cinema to public murals, crockery to puppetry.

2) Museum of Modern Art: "Isa Genzken: Retrospective" (also at MCA Chicago and Dallas Museum of Art)

A volcanic imagination, and an urge to capture the urban experience in form mark the work of this excitingly erratic, driven German artist.

3) MOCA Geffen: "Mike Kelley" (also at Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Detroit Institute of Arts)

One of the visionaries of our time. He took the Zeitgeist and ran with it; you followed at your own peril.

4) Prospect.3 New Orleans

Straddled the didactic and the polemic by making itself of New Orleans but not about it.

5) Frist Center for the Visual Arts: "Kandinsky: A Retrospective" (also at Milwaukee Art Museum)

The Kandinskys Americans don't always see, from his own collection donated by his widow.

6) Oakland Museum of California: "Fertile Ground: Art and Community in California"

Okay, *northern* California, but traced four moments of communal innovation in Bay Area art.

7) LACMA: "Marsden Hartley: The German Paintings 1913-1915" (also at the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin)

The profoundly personal proto-Pop abstractions of a lovelorn American in WWI Europe.

8) Brooklyn Museum: "Chicago in LA: Judy Chicago's Early Work, 1963-74"

What led up to the *Dinner Party*? This was how Gerowitz/Chicago's hard-edge/finish-fetish work came to flower.

9) Cal State Fullerton Begovich Gallery and Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery: "F. Scott Hess Retrospective" and Long Beach Museum of Art "The Paternal Suit: Heirlooms from the F. Scott Hess Family Foundation"

One of the wiser guys of the return-to-representation, as seen both in sprawling survey and a giddy show of his, ah, family tree.

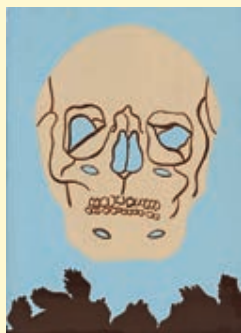
10) Orange County Museum of Art: "Sarkisian & Sarkisian"

Works by photorealist father Paul and video-installationist son Peter got on better than you'd think.

Honorable Mention: "Ed Moses: Cross-Section" at UC Irvine and "Roland Reiss" at Cal State Fullerton Begovich Gallery

If only these surveys of two of LA's painting *padrones* had been big enough to encompass the vision and achievement of their subjects.

The 2014 Whitney Biennial – Seriousness! Intelligence! Optimism! – and **"Unsettled Landscapes,"** the heady Americas-centric quasi-biennial at SITE Santa Fe.



LOS ANGELES MUSEUMS

By George Melrod

1) LACMA: "Expressionism in Germany and France: From Van Gogh to Kandinsky"

A stunning tour of early 20th century European painting, like reading an art history textbook on ecstasy. So that's how they all knew each other!

2) LACMA: "John Altoon"

Rarely seen works by LA's testosterone-filled '60s pioneer, straddling organic abstraction, Mad Men-style ad copy, erotic figuration, and who knows what else.

3) The Getty: "The Scandalous Art of James Ensor"

How often do we get to meet an artist who is generations ahead of his time? A revelation.

4) Long Beach Museum of Art: "The Paternal Suit: Heirlooms from the F. Scott Hess Family Foundation"

The painter's own family history, filtered through brilliant faux artifacts and razor-sharp wit.

5) The Hammer: "Made in LA 2014"

A collective, international, insider slice of SoCal zeitgeist. Talk amongst yourselves.

6) Torrance Art Museum: "Another Thing Coming: New Sculpture in LA"

Eclectic sculptural visions set out in funky dialogue. Almost makes Torrance sexy.

7) MOCA Geffen: "Mike Kelley"

Yes, his work could be off-putting with its candid sense of discomfort, and he made us all uneasy. Maybe that was the point.

8) The Hammer: "Robert Heinecken: Object Matter"

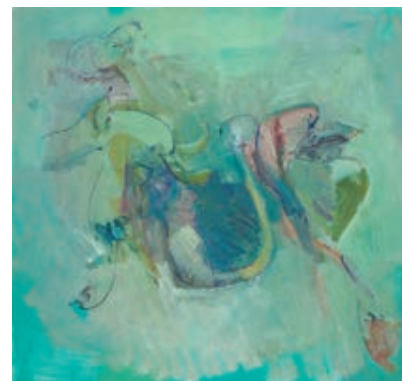
The pioneering SoCal para-photographer is both naughty and nifty in this MOMA survey.

9) LACMA: "Nature and the American Vision: The Hudson River School"

Take a ride back on the Hudson River line; I'm in a New York (Historical Society) state of mind.

10) MAK Center: "Tony Greene: Room of Advances"

Nearly 25 years after the painter's death from AIDS, it was Tony Greene's year, with three mini-surveys, including shows-within-shows at "Made in LA" and the Whitney Biennial. Haunting bodily elegies.



"UNTITLED," 1964, John Altoon
OIL ON CANVAS, 56 X 59 3/4"

©2014 ESTATE OF JOHN ALTOON
PHOTO: ©2014 MUSEUM ASSOCIATES/LACMA

LEFT:
"WE ARE ALL ON STAGE TOGETHER," 2001, Johanna Jackson

ACRYLIC GOUACHE ON WOOD, 7" X 5"
COLLECTION SFMOMA, GIFT OF AMY ADELSON AND DEAN VALENTINE; © JO JACKSON
ON VIEW AT "FERTILE GROUND: ART AND COMMUNITY IN CALIFORNIA"
OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES

By Shana Nys Dambrot

**1) Fabien Castanier: Miaz Brothers
"Miaz Brothers and the Masters"**

Luscious art-historical portraiture made with aerosol paint. Fuzzy focus, clear intention.

2) SCI-Arc: Heather Flood "Punk'd"

Sculpture, function, materialism and graphically majestically fused in a singular object.

3) Art Merge Lab: Devon Tsuno "Reclaimed Water"

Immersive, delicate depiction of water's pervasive abstraction and infinitely regenerative patterning.

4) Luis de Jesus: Lily Stockman "Women"

Quirky patterns flaunting assonant palettes are actually reductive portraits, mapped opinions, and feminist landscapes.

5) Mark Moore: Clayton Brothers "Open to the Public"

Mixed-media paintings and objects evoke the anthropological wonderland of a local thrift store.

6) Honor Fraser: Annie Lapin "Various Peep Shows"

It's easy to see why Lapin's biggest fans are often fellow painters.

7) Western Project: Mark Dean Veca "Everlast"

Painterly flourishes, pictorial expansions, saturated tertiary hues, and breakfast burritos.

8) Fellows of Contemporary Art: "Itch Scratch Scar"

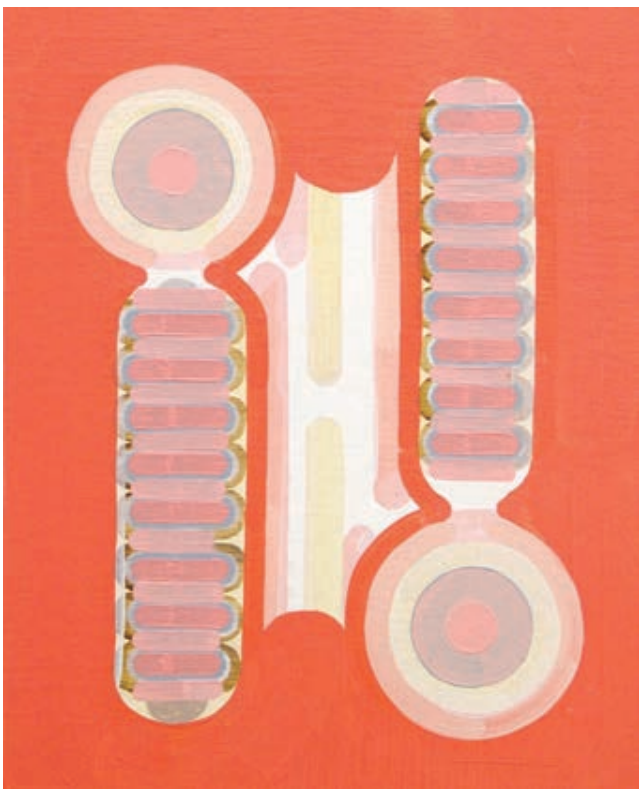
A deftly-curated group of painters, video-makers, and sculptors with spiritualized OCD.

9) Cohen Gallery: Siri Kaur "This Kind of Face"

Poignant photographic portraits reveal private and public lives of celebrity look-alikes.

**10) 5 Car Garage: Megan Daalder
"Eureka and the Biomass Man"**

Sculptural installation / sci-fi musical theatre love story between janitor and sentient blob.



"BAROMETER," 2014, Lily Stockman

OIL ON INDIAN LINEN, 20" x 16"

PHOTO: COURTESY LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES



"LADDER TO THE SKY," 2014, Mie Olise

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 47 1/4" x 43 3/4"

PHOTO: COURTESY SAMUEL FREEMAN GALLERY

LOS ANGELES

By Molly Enholm

1) LACMA:

#ChinesePaintings #Expressionism #Variations #KoreanTreasures
#Fútbol #Calder #Pashgian #Hartley #Altoon #AGreatYear

2) Samuel Freeman Gallery: Mie Olise "Noplocia"

Dilapidated structures, built from architectonic gestural brushwork, melancholy yet seductive.

**3) Jack Rutberg Fine Arts: Jerome and Joel-Peter Witkin
"Twin Visions"**

Two roads diverged and briefly reunite: subliminal and sublime, haunted and haunting.

4) Louis Stern Fine Arts: Karl Benjamin "The Late Paintings"

Muted tones found new rhythms under the direction of the renowned master of color harmonies.

5) Blum & Poe: "From All Sides: Tansaekhwa on Abstraction"

A retrospective of 1960s-70s Korean painting: hypnotic scrawls, repetitive hatching, torn patterns, and all of it powerful.

**6) Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects:
Sean Duffy/Shannon Finley**

A striking dichotomy: Duffy's bullet-hole Barnett-zipped minimalism juxtaposed with Finley's exuberant overlapping geometric abstractions.

7) ACME: Aaron Morse "Cloud World"

Expansive landscapes under electric Dixonesque-cloud filled skies stole the show

**8) USC Pacific Asia Museum: "The Other Side:
Chinese and Mexican Immigration to America"**

Artists tackle immigration and identity, starring Hung Liu and Tony de los Reyes.

9) Charlie James Gallery: Eske Kath "Arena"

Little boxes on the hillside, engulfed in forests, and set adrift in outer space.

**10) Garboushian Gallery: Yvette Gellis
"1,000 Ways to See It"**

Three-dimensional rifts on previous work, seemingly on the brink of new discoveries.

SAN FRANCISCO

By DeWitt Cheng

**1) Berkeley Art Museum: Barbara Chase-Riboud
"The Malcolm X Steles"**

Chase-Riboud's imposing steles commemorating black history were terrific—and timely, alas, in the Ferguson era.

**2) Mythos Gallery: "Beauty Fierce as Stars,
Groundbreaking Women Painters 1950s and Beyond"**

An important group show of Bay Area AbEx women painters from the 1950s onward.

**3) Sanchez Art Center: Robert Armstrong
"A Conjunction of Punctuative Emunctories"**

Hilarious and wonderful assemblages by the reclusive Santa Cruz artist; curated by Philip E. Linhares.

4) Haines Gallery: Yoshitomo Saito "Ethos in Bronze"

Mysterious poetic objects composed of botanical forms rendered in bronze, with allusions to Erik Satie.

5) Cantor Arts Center: "Robert Frank in America"

Formerly unknown outtakes from the Swiss photographer's odyssey and historic 1959 book, "The Americans."

6) Anderson Collection at Stanford University

Stellar collection of postwar American art got a fitting home designed by Richard Olcott.

7) Vessel Gallery: "Discovering Uncharted Territories"

Ron Weil's charcoal drawings and William Schwob's ceramic sculptures blended perfectly in this museum-worthy show.

8) For-Site Foundation: "@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz"

The international art star brought his human-rights politics to historic, tragic Alcatraz island.

9) Dolby Chadwick Gallery: Udo Nöger "Beyond"

These abstract paintings—actually shallow assemblages—change subtly, depending on ambient lighting and viewer position.

10) Chandra Cerrito Contemporary:

Randy Colosky "Rise and Fall"

The materials-based explorations of this Bay Area artist continue to yield quirky, satisfying artworks.



"ALL THAT RISES MUST CONVERGE / RED," 2008, **Barbara Chase-Riboud**
RED BRONZE, SILK, COTTON, AND SYNTHETIC FIBERS, 74½" x 42" x 28"
PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND BERKELEY ART MUSEUM



"ODD KNOX JR.," 2014, **Paul Nudd**

INK, WATERCOLOR, COLORED PENCIL, GOUACHE,

ACRYLIC, PENCIL ON PAPER, 65½" X 42" PHOTO: COURTESY WESTERN EXHIBITIONS

CHICAGO

By James Yood

1) Rhona Hoffman Gallery: Richard Rezac "Signal"

How can sculpture so subtle and muted be so visually intense?

2) Museum of Contemporary Art: William J. O'Brien

Making clay (and more!) contemporary, a fine mid career retrospective, each room a delight.

3) Perimeter Gallery: Neil Goodman "Pulse"

Offering bronze abstractions as reflective and wise, it was form as thought.

**4) Three Walls: Faith Wilding "Fearful Symmetries:
A Retrospective"**

A Feminist pioneer looks back and forward, intriguing in both directions.

5) Western Exhibitions: Paul Nudd "Pituitumorphology"

Gross, vulgar, repellent, lurid, excessive, funny and did I mention drop dead terrific?

**6) Carrie Secrist Gallery: Paul Anthony Smith
"Mangos and Crab"**

Means and ends perfectly combined, and you get to learn the word 'picotage'.

7) Corbett vs. Dempsey: Josiah McElheny "Dusty Groove"

This guy simply can't make an uninteresting object—with music too!

8) Chicago Cultural Center: Adelheid Mers "Enter the Matrix"

Diagrams that show you how you might get from here to there, and well worth the trip.

9) moniquemeloch gallery: Carrie Schneider "Reading Women"

Turn the page! A sweet continuum, kind of like Vermeer with a camera.

10) Andrew Rafacz Gallery: Samantha Bittman "Razzle Dazzle"

Even the wall looked great—who says Minimalism can't have a pulse?

SEATTLE-TACOMA

By Matthew Kangas

1) Tacoma Art Museum: "Art of the American West: The Haub Family Collection"

Extraordinary new architecture surrounds hundreds of new gifts of artworks from the American West.

2) Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington: Ann Hamilton "the common SENSE"

Amazing entire-museum installation about human-animal relationships comprises one of the artist's largest projects.

3) Seattle Asian Art Museum:

"Deco Japan: Shaping Art and Culture, 1920-1945"

Hundreds of decorative arts objects from interwar Japan that reinforced imported ideas of social freedom.

4) Seattle Art Museum: "Modernism in the Pacific Northwest: The Mythic and the Mystical"

While not definitive (no East Coast loans), survey showed how SAM's holdings make them the top center for midcentury Northwest art.

5) Abmeyer+Wood Fine Art:

Doris Chase "Sculpture: 1964-74"

Dance video pioneer was an important regional artist before moving to New York, as these modernist sculptures affirmed.

6) Seattle Art Museum: "Miró: The Experience of Seeing"

Definitive survey of late-period sculptures and paintings by the Catalan artist who changed modern art.

7) Platform Gallery: Lauren Grossman "Ghost Variations"

Veteran mixed-media sculptor whose metal-and-glass assemblages revolve around ideas of breath with typically eccentric imagery.

8) G. Gibson Gallery: Cable Griffith "Quest"

Part of a growing movement of younger abstract landscape painters, this was a breakthrough grouping with influences of video games and thick, painterly sources.

9) Linda Hodges Gallery: Gaylen Hansen

Now 93, the Pullman, WA resident cannot stop painting his signature alter ego amid stern ecological warnings mixed with humor.

10) G. Gibson Gallery: Susanna Bluhm "Carry Me"

Delightfully ambiguous landscape scenes whose mixed-up imagery, gorgeous textures, and large scale suggest the persistence of painting among younger artists.



PORTLAND

By Richard Speer

1) Charles A. Hartman Fine Art:

Hayley Barker "Apparition Hill"

Eye-boggling remembrances of Barker's recent trip to a mystical shrine in Herzegovina.

2) Blue Sky:

Carol Yarrow "One Mahogany Left Standing"

A moving tribute to a people (Lacandon Mayan villagers in Chiapas, Mexico) whose way of life is vanishing.

3) Elizabeth Leach Gallery:

Gregg Renfrow "Dream With Your Eyes Open"

Formal rigor + organic shapes + psychedelic colors = Wow!

4) Augen Gallery: Eva Lake "Anonymous Women"

Lake's collages wittily critique the role of women in our cultural imagination.

5) PDX Contemporary Art:

Wes Mills "Hamilton Drawings"

Intricately folded works on paper, obsessive in their complexity.

6) Laura Russo Gallery: Sherrie Wolf "Museum"

A rollicking journey through the history of art, with a virtuoso painter as tour guide.

7) UPFOR Gallery:

Jordan Rathus "Fernweh (Farsickness)"

A winkily, nerdily sexy deconstruction of narcissism in the age of social media.

8) Bullseye Gallery: Jeffrey Sarmiento "Constructions"

A materially and thematically ambitious show capped by a 9-foot-tall sculpture of steel, aluminum and glass.

9) Butters Gallery: "Artistic License"

A bravura exploration of the monoprint, with star turns by artists such as Bernd Haussmann, Eva Isaksen, and Melinda Stickney-Gibson.

10) Froelick Gallery: Laura Ross-Paul "Urban Forest"

Can humans coexist in harmony with nature? Ross-Paul's paintings offer a resounding YES.

TOP:

"ANONYMOUS WOMAN No. 58," 2012, **Eva Lake**

MIXED MEDIA, 10¼" x 10½"

PHOTO: COURTESY AUGEN GALLERY

LEFT:

"NESTING," 1971, **Doris Chase**

OAK, 9" x 10" x 11"

PHOTO: COURTESY ABMEYER + WOOD FINE ART

SANTA FE

By Jon Carver

1) Ellsworth Gallery: Timothy Nero "Mind Gears"

These perfectly bizarre painting-objects were the best surprise of the season.

2) Tai Modern: Ramona Sakiestewa "Tangram Butterfly and Other Shapes"

The pottery shards of a Hopi childhood, and an ancient Chinese puzzle can indeed capture biomorphic form.

3) Yares Projects: Paul Bloch "Metamorphosis"

Bernini meets astrophysical speculation in stunning white marble forms.

4) Museum of International Folk Art: "Between Two Worlds - Folk Artists Reflect on the Immigrant Experience"

Folk artists doing what legislative bodies around the world can't.

5) Gerald Peters Gallery: Mike Glier "Glenorchy"

Glier is a painter of great facility and invention, this time in New Zealand.

6) PHILSPACE: Erika Wanenmacher "Incorporate"

Yet another surreal set of sublime visions from Wanenmacher's super-brain.

7) Verve Gallery of Photography: Kamil Vojnar "Elsewhere"

Hand-painted photo imagery hauntingly in touch with modern anxieties.

8) NUART Gallery:

Santiago Perez "go back to earth..."

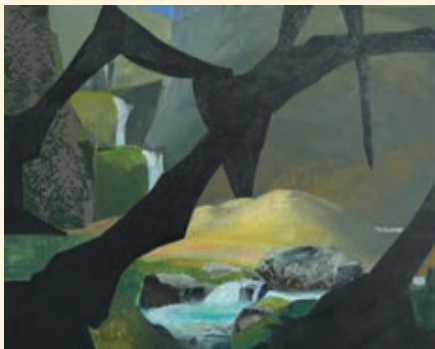
A fairy-tale world may just be the best way to satirize, ala Goya, serious grown-up and societal problems.

9) Harwood Museum of Art: Ken Price "Slow and Steady Wins the Race, Works on Paper 1962-2010"

Afforded excellent insights into the late, great sculptor's marvelous mind.

10) Charlotte Jackson Fine Art: Ronald Davis "Unidentified Floating Objects"

Davis's signature paintings hovered splendidly in the pared-down space of the Railyard gallery.



"JANUARY 26, 2012: ROUTEBURN, NEW ZEALAND," 2012, Michael Glier
OIL ON ALUMINUM PANEL
40" x 50" x 1 1/4"

PHOTO: COURTESY GERALD PETERS GALLERY

DENVER

By Michael Paglia

1) Denver Art Museum: "Modern Masters"

Not just the biggest names in abstract expressionism, their greatest works, too.

2) Arvada Center:

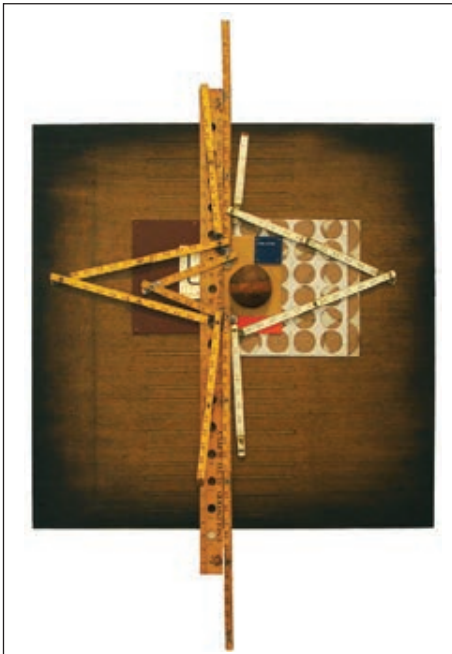
"Unbound: Sculpture in the Field"

A grassy hillside became a sculpture garden with this Colorado survey.

3) William Havu Gallery:

Emilio Lobato "The Measure of a Man"

Rulers and yardsticks lead to constructivist works exploring life and death.



"MAN CAVE ACCESSORY #2," 2014, Emilio Lobato
ASSEMBLAGE, COLLAGE & OIL ON PANEL
47" x 30" x 4"

PHOTO: COURTESY WILLIAM HAVU GALLERY

4) Museo de las Americas: "Outside in 303"

A bunch of Latino Westside street taggers who have stepped up into the fine arts.

5) Robischon Gallery:

Kevin O'Connell "Memories of Water"

Stark and poetic photos concerning the water shortage in the West.

6) Clyfford Still Museum: "1959"

A recreation of the key in-period museum solo for this giant of American art.

7) Ironton Studios and Gallery:

Stephen Batura "Stream"

Taking in 110 feet of painting depicting water was like walking along a river.

8) McNichols Building: "Open Press: Celebrating 25 Years of Printmaking"

Prints by a Who's Who of Denver artists from the last quarter century.

9) Goodwin Fine Art:

"Far North & Outer Space"

A duet proving that Alaskan mountains look a lot like those on Mars.

10) Gildar Gallery:

Dmitri Obergfell "Yinfinity"

Conceptual riffs off varied icons that are put through a custom-car-culture sieve.

HOUSTON

By Donna Tennant

1) Inman Gallery: Dario Robleto "Life, Left to Struggle in the Sun"

A desire to comprehend and connect with life's great mysteries yields remarkable art.

2) Anya Tish Gallery:

HJ Bott "Scribble Morphings"

The result of a brilliant mind coupled with an insatiable desire to create.

3) BLUEorange: Abigail McLaurin

"Golden as Drops of Grain"

Effective blend of abstraction and figuration by an artist on the verge of wider recognition.

4) McClain Gallery:

Karin Broker "damn girls"

Large, lush drawings on Formica and metal sculpture from a formidable artist.

5) Museum of Fine Arts, Houston:

John Singer Sargent "The Watercolors"

Nearly 100 dazzling watercolors by a master of the medium.

6) Hooks-Epstein Galleries:

Edward Lane McCartney "Wallpaper, Notions and Preserves: a curious purveyance"

Maestro of materials manipulates everyday objects into exquisite works of art.

7) Deborah Colton Gallery: Alfredo

Scaroina "Reclaimed Matter"

Mix of magic and mystery in large, densely textured paintings.

8) Contemporary Arts Museum Houston:

Debra Barrera "Right Here, Right Now: Houston"

Young artist's provocative work riffs on the concept of "escape" in major museum show.

9) Redbud Gallery:

Juan Aaron Castillo "steambath-scopop"

Anxiety and alienation made palatable in complex enigmatic drawings.

10) Art Car Museum: John Atlas

"A Survey of Work 1969-2014"

Long-awaited survey of rarely shown Houston artist provides insight into inventive mind.



"Eco-ECHO-SPACES," 2014, HJ Bott
GLAZED ACRYLICS ON CANVAS, 34" x 34"
PHOTO: SARAH ANSELL, COURTESY ANYA TISH GALLERY