

CRITIC'S PICKS: HOUSTON

By Nancy Zastudil

Swiss-born, New York-based artist **Katja Loher** starts with an idea, a message, and lets it "become its own creature," taking cues from Earth's pollinators for how to use beauty and movement to communicate the importance of ecological relationships. Loher works across disciplines, enlisting a choreographer, costume designer, dancers, musicians, and more to help create "video-portals" to a kaleidoscopic world that unfolds to reveal an ideal, and questionably attainable, synchronicity of humans and nature. Filmed from a bird's eye view against vividly colored backdrops—or landscapes—of patterns produced by sound waves, enchanting dancers cloaked in bird and insect costumes move together to form letters, words and questions inspired by Pablo Neruda's *Book of Questions*. Loher houses her "miniverse" video creations in small minimal wall-mounted portals and tabletop scientific beaker-like sculptures, often capped with hand-blown clear glass or acrylic hemispheres that bring to mind Petri dishes, the globe of Earth, the oculus of our eyes, and cycles of life. "Where Does Time Begin" is the fourth collaboration between Anya Tish Gallery and Loher, and dancers from her video portals will perform and interact with the gallery audience during the exhibition opening on September 11 through October 10, 2015.



"WHERE DOES TIME BEGIN?," 2015

Katja Loher

TWO-CHANNEL VIDEO, 7:15 MINUTES LOOPED, SELF-CONTAINED VIDEOSCULPTURE WITH ACRYLIC HEMI-SPHERES, 26" X 42½" X 10"

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

September marks Kerry Inman Gallery's 25th anniversary and, with an exhibition of new works by **Demetrius Oliver**, the gallery shows no signs of slowing down or shying away from provocative art. For his show "Anemometer," New York-based Oliver continues to use found imagery and everyday physical materials to explore abstract ideas



"VANE III," 2015, **Demetrius Oliver**

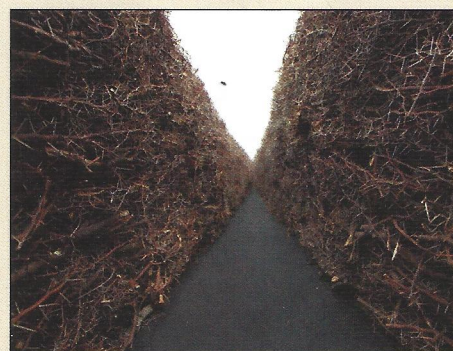
ENAMEL ON PAPER, 30" X 22"

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND INMAN GALLERY, HOUSTON

and interpret phenomena, specifically positioning the artist's studio and the gallery as a celestial or cosmic observatory. In this case the installation, inspired by a three centuries old storm on the planet Jupiter, is a collection of sculptures, photographs and drawings using prosaic materials that interact with properties of air, going so far as to obstruct several of the gallery doorways with aluminum storm shutters. Whereas previously his work could be considered an inquiry on the act of looking, this exhibition hints at the effects of atmospheres as well. Oliver studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and the University of Pennsylvania before attending the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture; he is currently a visual arts lecturer at Princeton. In 2010, he presented *Jupiter*, an installation for New York's High Line that celebrated the autumnal equinox and the Jupiter opposition, and was on view for an entire lunar cycle. "Anemometer" runs September 11 to October 24, 2015, at Inman Gallery.

Miguel Angel Rios is known for striking a poetic balance between the aesthetic and the political, most often using the remote desert landscape as a charged setting through which to explore political dislocation, altered states of consciousness and aware-

ness, power and vulnerability. In the mid-1970s, in order to escape military dictatorship, Rios fled his home country of Argentina and relocated to New York City, eventually also living part time in Mexico City, where he could safely reconnect with Latin America. Since the 2000s, Rios has used video to create symbolic narratives about such human experience, violence, and mortality—as well as the legacies of modernism. For "Endless," his exhibition at Sicardi Gallery, Rios includes a new video titled *Piedras Blancas* (2014), in which the camera follows a small avalanche of uniformly shaped white balls as they quickly tear downhill through grooves in the dusty terrain. At times, some of the balls crack and crumble, or get sidetracked or stuck, while the masses end up in a large pile at the end of what could be considered the end of destiny's trajectory. "Endless" also includes a collection of related drawings and photographs and will be on view at Sicardi Gallery, September 15 through November 21, 2015.

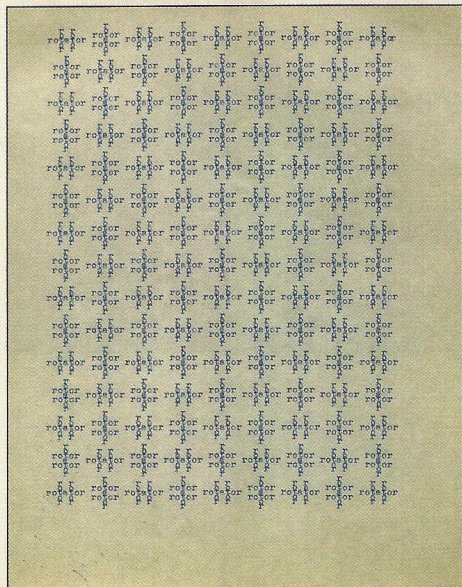


"UNTITLED No. 1988," FROM THE SERIES "ENDLESS" 2015

Miguel Angel Rios

INKJET PRINT ON HAHNEMÜHLE COTTON PAPER, DIBOND
PHOTO: COURTESY SICARDI GALLERY

James Siena's exhibition of typewriter drawings at Hiram Butler Gallery illustrates his use of "visual algorithms," or self-imposed systems and restraints. Works of a similar sort and spirit come from an art historical lineage that includes groups like Oulipo and Concrete Poetry, individual artists such as Carl Andre and abstract painter Frederick Hammersley who made computer drawings in 1969. Siena's typewriter drawings were initially inspired, in part, by typographic emails and analog "emoji" characters, his love for and collection of typewriters, and an affinity for



"UNTITLED (ROTOR ROTATOR DOUBLE CROSS)," 2014
James Siena

INK ON PAPER, 11" X 8½"

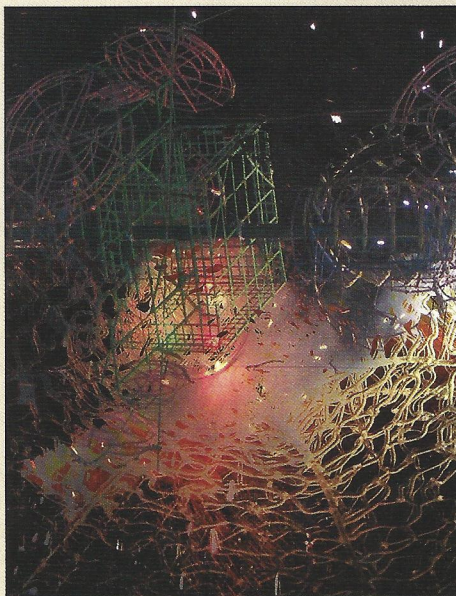
PHOTO: COURTESY HIRAM BUTLER GALLERY

palindrome. Each drawing is a riff on potential patterns in the arrangement of numbers, letters, and punctuation in order to create not only a visual, aesthetic effect (sometimes typing in colored ink) but also a conceptual and linguistic one—often a rift in the pattern is meant to draw attention to something else in the visual field. With a career that spills into design and theatre, as well as running a gallery on New York's Lower East side called Sometimes (A Work of Art), it's clear the Siena's systems allow for a wide range of twists and turns. In his words: "I don't make marks. I make moves." James Siena's typewriter drawings are on view September 5 to October 31, 2015.

This fall, Deborah Colton Gallery presents "SOUL RETRIEVAL," Susan Plum's first solo exhibition at the gallery, comprised primarily of works on paper and glass sculptures. Raised in Mexico City and trained as a painter, Plum began using glass after extended travel through parts of Asia. While living in Seattle, she discovered "flame working," which involves using a torch and the ultimate alchemical material—glass—to create sculptures that then further inspire her photographs and drawings. The exhibition's title is based on a shamanistic understanding

of soul loss, wherein souls leave the physical body, most often due to trauma or abuse, and wander in the shamanic realms. Plum believes that today the role of the shaman in society is carried out by artists, musicians, scientists, cosmologists and members of ancient spiritual traditions, explaining that the exhibition presents a "cosmic story... asking the question, or 'divining,' what changes we—all of Nature—are going through, these evolutionary growing pains." That story is depicted by mysterious webs and cloud-like bodies, brightly colored symbolic shapes such as triangles and circles, delicate lines and labyrinths on the backdrop of a deep dark abyss. "SOUL RETRIEVAL" can be seen at Deborah Colton Gallery September 12 through October 31, 2015.

The Bridge Club, an art and performance group with "an anonymous collective persona," is comprised of four women who address universal themes in timeless fashion (literally and figuratively) to play with preconceived notions of art, audience, and performance. They appeared on the Southwest art scene in 2004, took Texas by storm in 2010, and had their first solo exhibition in Houston at Art Palace in 2012, for which the performers literally placed themselves where the art typically hangs—on the walls. For



"LUZ Y FIEGO / FIRE AND LIGHT," 2015

Susan Plum

INKJET PRINT, 50" X 55"

PHOTO: COURTESY DEBORAH COLTON GALLERY



"THE VERGE I," 2015

The Bridge Club

ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 60" X 40"

FROM THE THE VERGE, LIVE PERFORMANCE WITH THE TRAILER. PROSPECT 3+ BIENNIAL SATELLITE VENUE PROGRAMMING PRESENTED BY PRESS STREET, NEW ORLEANS, LA, OCTOBER 2014.

PHOTO: THE BRIDGE CLUB & ART PALACE

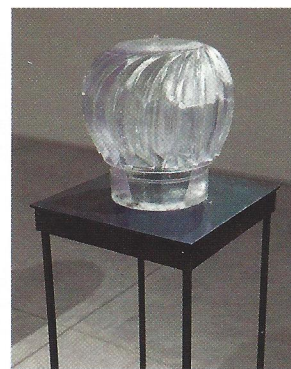
"Cut," their new exhibition at Art Palace, The Bridge Club executes a new performance amidst an exhibition of photographs of live performances over the past two years. From a low pedestal, the four women cut away fabric from one another's garments—color coordinated with the dresses they are wearing in the photographs—to question traditional female roles in art and the subtle violence of female complicity. Though references to Yoko Ono's "Cut Piece" are unavoidable, The Bridge Club uses "Cut" as another opportunity to transcend expectations about a specific time and place, outfitting themselves with clothes, wigs, props and attitudes that enhance vague historical theatrics, creating "an unsettling normative air to odd or uncomfortable situations." On view at Art Palace from September 11 through October 24, 2015.

Papercity

HOUSTON OCTOBER 2015

Art Notes

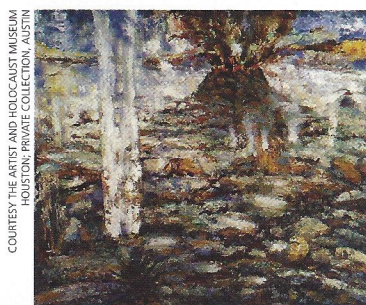
Dual Must-Sees: At Inman Gallery, former Core Fellow **Demetrius Oliver's** quiet, ceremonial exhibition conjures ideas about wind and outer space; the show, elusively titled "Anemometer," is both open ended and hypnotic as it furthers the artist's quest to wrest the profound from the mundane (through October 24) ... Mid-career expressionist **Michael Collins** solos at **Holocaust Museum Houston**, producing the powerful



Demetrius Oliver's *Atmospheric I*, 2015, at Inman Gallery

"Sojourn in the Shadowlands." The exhibition interweaves a sense of nature and place with emanations from the horrors of the Holocaust to point the way to hope (October 15 – March 13). Just

in: **Sally Reynolds** curates Collins' upcoming career-defining retrospective, set for January 2016 at **Brookfield Properties' Two Allen Center** downtown. **A Sacred Tree:** Perfect for autumn, **Susan Plum's** solo at **Deborah Colton Gallery** includes a tree ringed by turmeric and illuminated by a single candle, that replicates Mayan cosmology (through October 31). **Tower of (Drawing) Power:** This year's most remarkable drawing show can be found at **Williams Tower Gallery**. **Sally Sprout** continues the tradition of curating for this iconic Philip Johnson skyscraper, filling its lobby with drawings uncovered from living rooms and back rooms, including some impressive 1970s-era **H.J. Bott's**, The Menil Collection Bookstore's **Paul Forsythe's** epic abstracts presented side-by-side with compact studies by his partner, **David Aylsworth**; intimate works by **Lisa Ludwig** that allude to vines; vaporous abstractions with an Asian touch by **Salle Werner-Vaughn**, and the Menil's **Chris Akin**, contributing deft Surreal pen sketches executed



Michael Collins' *The Volcano*, 2008 - 2009, at HHM

upon Starbucks napkins (through October 14). **A Million-Dollar Homecoming:** At last, **Galveston Arts Center** returns to its plum 12nd-and-Strand home next month. The historic turn-of-the-century cast-iron building will be fully restored and open as of mid-November, curator **Clint Willour** reveals. The island's **Moody Foundation** was big angel that came forward with the final million dollars to make this possible, seven years after Hurricane Ike struck. Up now at GAC's temporary location (25th and Market) is a show of exquisite plant-inspired art by centenarian/former Rice architecture professor **Elinor Evans** (October 10 – November 23). **Ghostly Goings-On: The Menil Collection's** "Apparitions: Frottages and Rubbings from 1860 to Now" rounds up artists from **Lichtenstein** to **Breton** who employed this technique; watch for the complete **Max Ernst** portfolio of his Surrealist manifesto, *Histoire Naturelle*. Co-presented by the Menil and L.A.'s **Hammer Museum**, this evocative jewel of an exhibition is organized by Menil Drawing Center curator at large **Allegra Pesenti** (through January 3). **Resplendent Abstraction:** We're also fans of these painters who channel the natural world onto canvas or paper: **Anastasia Pelias** at **Octavia Art Gallery** (October 9 – November 13) and **Ted Cowart** and **Sunny McKinnon** in a perfect painting at **Arden's Gallery** (October 3 – 31). **Online Action:** For more art topics, including our take on the **Texas Contemporary Art Fair** cinco edition (set for October 1 through October 4 at the **George R. Brown Convention Center**) and **Rice Gallery's** exquisite **Anila Quayyum Agha** installation (through December 6), visit papercitymag.com.

Catherine D. Ansporn

Must-See Art Guide: Houston

Astyaj Ghassemi, Thursday, October 1, 2015

Starting today, the Lone Star state's art scene is in full bloom. Visitors will be frolicking to the Texas Contemporary fair as it welcomes 59 galleries from Texas and beyond to showcase leading contemporary and modern art at the George R. Brown Convention Center. But it doesn't stop there: there are plenty of must-see shows happening in and around the most populous city in Texas that you definitely don't want to miss. Luckily, we have you covered.

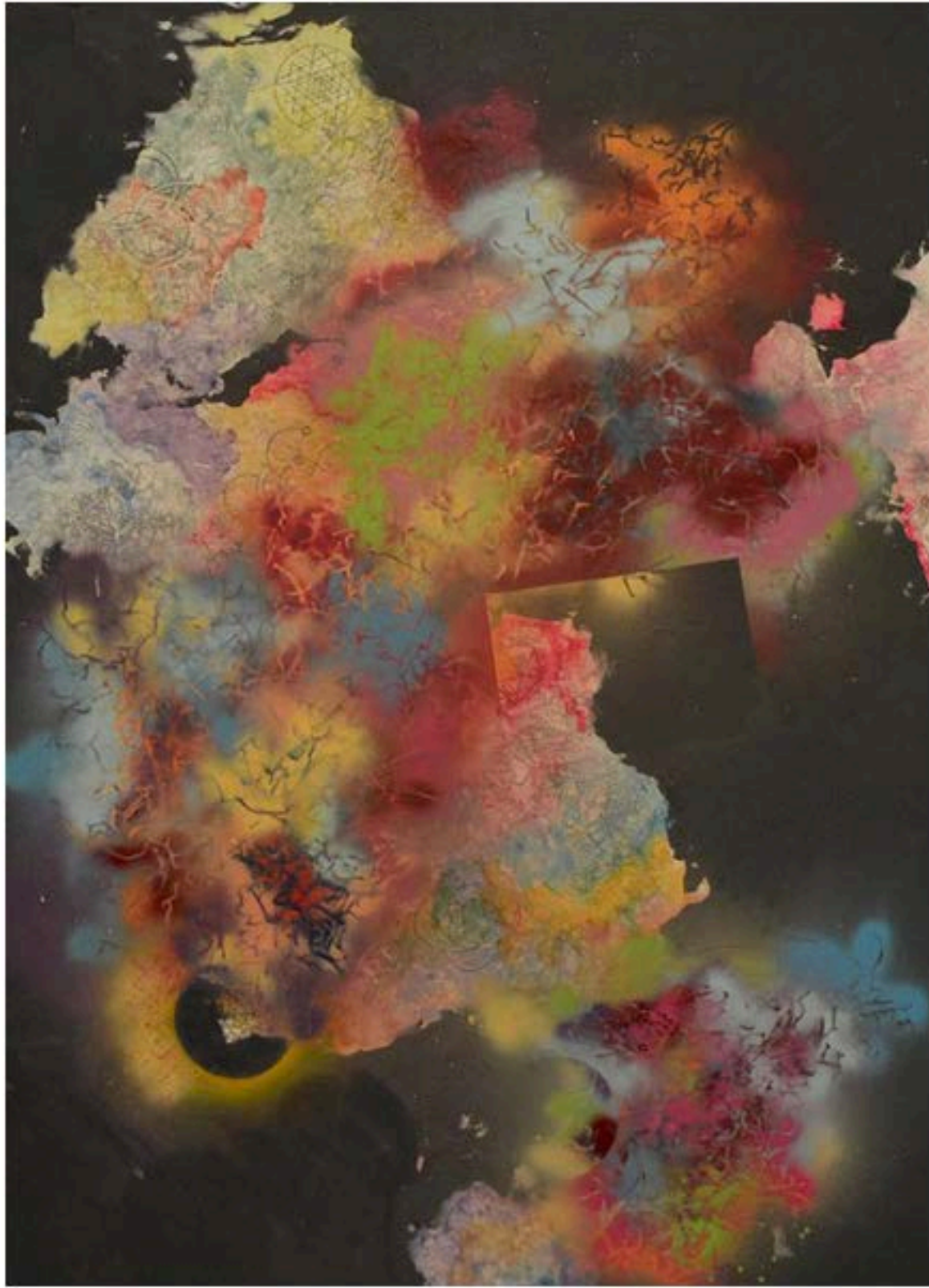
For those of you who would rather skip the fair crowds and seek out a more intimate viewing experience, head over to [McClain Gallery](#), showcasing the second solo show of New York-based artist Bo Joseph, "Souvenirs from Nowhere." Expect to see an array of abstract drawings, including a new series made with his labor-intensive process of constructing and deconstructing cultural references into abstract forms. From there, cross the Southwest freeway to [Deborah Colton Gallery](#) to see "SOUL RETRIEVAL," a show by famed glass sculptor Susan Plum. This marks her first solo exhibition at the gallery, and presents her latest works on paper and ethereal glass sculptures. Cap off your gallery crawl at Barbara Davis Gallery, for another solo show by Houston native Paul Fleming. Captivated by the forms of everyday objects, Fleming strips away their ordinary function and transforms them into modular elements of his compositions. Lastly, if there is just one show that you should see while you're here, it's the recently opened "[Mark Rothko: A Retrospective](#)" at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The museum is the sole U.S. venue to present this definitive retrospective of this master of abstraction, so you better not miss your chance.

After having your fill of art, it might be time to treat yourself to a steak and a beer. You are in Texas, after all.

Exhibition: "Susan Plum: Soul Retrieval"

When: September 12–October 31, 2015

Where: Deborah Colton Gallery, 2445 N. Boulevard, Houston, TX



Susan Plum *Strange Nature (Bringing the Fragments Home)* (2015). Courtesy of Deborah Colton Gallery.