

ART & DESIGN

# What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week

By MARTHA SCHWENDENER, KEN JOHNSON, KAREN ROSENBERG and HOLLAND COTTER    SEPT. 8, 2016

Georges Hugnet

‘Huit jours à Trébaumec’

*Ubu Gallery*

*416 East 59th Street, Manhattan*

*Through Sept. 30*

In 1900, two French businessmen, the brothers André and Édouard Michelin, published a guide to help sell automobiles — or, more specifically, the tires they manufactured for them. By the late 1940s, the Michelin Guide, which rated historical sites, hotels and restaurants on a star system, was a French institution and perfect fodder for a Surrealist-style parody, which Georges Hugnet (1906-74) began in 1947. It took Mr. Hugnet 22 years to complete his faux Michelin guide, but it is a small masterpiece. Ubu Gallery is showing original collages from the guide, as well as maquettes of it and versions that were published by the bookbinder Henri Mercher in 1969.

Mr. Hugnet's guide centers on a fictional town in Brittany called Trébaumec, whose name is a French pun that roughly translates as "good-looking guy." Rather than the customary Michelin Man, Mr. Hugnet provides a Michelin woman as a guide. Per the Surrealist ethos, there are lots of uncanny juxtapositions and odd setups involving castles, beaches and banquets. Day converges with night; people cavort nude or in absurd military costumes; familial, class and animal-human relationships are turned upside down.

Mr. Hugnet's Michelin Guide is mostly madcap fun, but underneath ripple the legacies of colonialism, which introduced "exotic" foreign lands and generally paved the way for tourism. (Some of Michelin's earliest guides were for French colonies, like Algeria and Tunisia.) And now that we live in an era in which online guides and apps rate everything from beaches and food trucks to doctors, the hardcover Michelin Guide looks quaint, but Mr. Hugnet's gonzo approach to culture is oddly prescient.

MARTHA SCHWENDENER

## Jessica Stockholder

### 'The Guests All Crowded Into the Dining Room'

*Mitchell-Innes & Nash*

*534 West 26th Street, Chelsea*

*Through Oct. 1*

Jessica Stockholder's colorful assemblages of diverse store-bought and found objects call to mind a term from neuroscience, "multisensory binding." The phrase refers to the fact that the outer world appears to us seamlessly coherent, despite the many sensory signals streaming in from diverse sources — eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. Usually we don't notice how the mind binds together these different inputs. In Ms. Stockholder's engaging, if not wildly exciting, show of sculptures at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, your awareness of your attention's shifting between the disparate parts and the whole composition is essential.

Here are the ingredients of “Security Detail”: “Unistrut, old scrap of tire, wooden stool, hardware, braided metal cable, plastic parts, shoulder bag, acrylic painting, oil paint, roofing tar, two 6- by 6- by 1-inch painted panels.” That all these elements remain individually identifiable while being elegantly unified into a single work of art makes this piece and Ms. Stockholder’s others visually appealing and cognitively intriguing.

A problem with her recent work, however, is that it looks too suavely practiced, the unruly, dissonant dimension overly harmonized by her canny formal skills. This is especially the case in the big installation that gives the show its title, “The Guests All Crowded Into the Dining Room,” which resembles a suburban backyard deck designed by a young Frank Gehry. While it adequately serves as a platform from which to view Ms. Stockholder’s sketchy drawings on oblong pieces of paper affixed to adjacent gallery walls, it needs some more surprising dimension to upset the functional order and enliven it as art.

KEN JOHNSON

‘Caza’

‘Rochele Gomez, Margaret Lee, Alejandra Seeber’

*Bronx Museum of the Arts*

*1040 Grand Concourse, at 165th Street, Morrisania*

*Through Sept. 25*

In Spanish, the word “caza,” or “hunt,” is a homophone of “casa,” or “house.” This play of language has inspired a smart and snappy show at the Bronx Museum about the “taming” of art in the domestic environment, an exhibition that’s loaded with double meanings and dual identities.

The artist-dealer Margaret Lee (a partner in the Lower East Side gallery 47 Canal) contributes painting-sculpture hybrids and paint-splashed photographs that subordinate pieces of high Modern art and design (a Brancusi column, a Rietveld chair) to her own black-and-white décor schemes. From the painter Alejandra

Seeber, born in Buenos Aires and based in New York, come paintings of similarly purposeful (if less witty) confusion; with their fuzzy and elided glimpses of Modern and contemporary art hanging in high-end interiors, they're not sure whether they want to highlight the creativity of others or strike out on their own as wall candy.

Most intriguing are the multimedia efforts of the Angeleno artist Rochele Gomez, here represented by drawings, a video and a sculptural assemblage. The drawings, which show Giacometti sculptures coming to life within the rooms of the home of the artist's parents, are fanciful, on topic and beautifully executed. But the piece that stays with you is the video, "Welding With Shelly," in which a young woman applies an acetylene torch to a large metal sculpture in a makeshift bedroom studio.

"Caza" is the first show in "The Neighbors," a three-part exhibition series of emerging artists, overseen by the guest curator Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy. Although it's a bit early to tell, this group of shows seems like one of the more promising developments for a museum that's currently a house divided. (Several board members recently resigned because of disagreements with the director over programming; the interim appointment of two new members has since been announced.)

One auspicious sign: the accompanying leaflets by the young designer Gerardo Madera, who has his own interpretation of "Neighbors." For "Caza," he interviewed the show's artists about their own neighbor experiences and printed snippets of these conversations alongside stills from a film of personal significance, "Nueba Yol" (1995), about an extended family of Dominican immigrants living in New York.

KAREN ROSENBERG

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