

The New York Times

[Art & Design](#)

Museum and Gallery Listings for March 7-13

MARCH 6, 2014

Museums and galleries are in Manhattan unless otherwise noted. Full reviews of recent art shows: nytimes.com/art. A searchable guide to these and many other art shows is at nytimes.com/events.

Museums

★ **Asia Society and Museum: ‘Golden Visions of Densatil: A Tibetan Buddhist Monastery’** (through May 18) In the early 20th century, Tibet had thousands of active monasteries; when the Cultural Revolution ended in 1976, it had fewer than 10. Among the major losses was one called Densatil, renowned for eight sculpture-encrusted and gilded stupas, or reliquary monuments, housed in its interior. All were dismantled, but marvelous fragments have been gathered for this rough-cut, but imaginative, tier-by-tier reconstruction spread through an Asia Society gallery. 725 Park Avenue, at 70th Street, 212-288-6400, asiasociety.org/new-york. (Holland Cotter)

Brooklyn Museum: ‘Divine Felines: Cats of Ancient Egypt’ (through December) If your dream of heaven is eternity spent with the pets you love, this show is for you. All of its 30 objects, sifted from the museum’s renowned Egyptian collection, are of cats, big and little, feral and tame, celestial and not. Whether cast in bronze or carved in stone, their forms and personalities were meant to outlast time, and so they have. 200 Eastern Parkway, at Prospect Park, 718-638-5000, brooklynmuseum.org. (Cotter)

★ **Frick Collection: ‘Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes From the Hill Collection’** (through June 15) This sensational, beautifully presented show of 33 late-15th- to early-18th-century bronzes reflects a taste for historically important, big-statement examples in exceptional condition. They vividly reflect the Renaissance’s new interest in antiquity and the human form while encouraging concentration on emotional expression, refined details (great hair!), struggling or relaxed figures, and varied patinas. Works by the reigning geniuses Giambologna, Susini and the lesser-known Piamontini dominate, further enlivened by a handful of old master and late-20th-century paintings from the Hill collection. 1 East 70th Street, Manhattan, 212-288-0700, frick.org. (Roberta Smith)

★ **Guggenheim Museum: ‘Carrie Mae Weems: Three Decades of Photography and Video’** (through May 14) Color and class are still the great divides in American culture, and few artists have surveyed them as subtly and incisively as Ms. Weems, whose traveling 30-year retrospective has arrived at the Guggenheim. From its early candid family photographs — through a series of pictures that track the Africa in African-American — to work that probes, over decades, what it means to be black, female and in charge of your life, it’s a ripe, questioning and beautiful show. All the more galling, then, that this museum has cut it down to nearly half its original size and split it between two floors of annex galleries, making an exhibition that should have filled the main-event rotunda into a secondary attraction. 1071 Fifth Avenue, at 89th Street, 212-423-3500, guggenheim.org. (Cotter)

Guggenheim Museum: ‘Italian Futurism, 1909-1944: Reconstructing the Universe’ (through Sept. 1) This epic, beautifully designed exhibition may be the most thorough examination of modernism’s most obnoxious and conflicted art movement that you are likely to see. Awash in the manifestoes that its members regularly fired off, it follows Futurism through to its end with the death of its founder Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in 1944. It covers the Futurist obsessions with speed, war, machines and, finally, flight and the aerial views it made possible. And the show highlights relatively unknown figures like the delightful Fortunato Depero and Benedetta Cappa, Marinetti’s wife. 1071 Fifth Avenue, at 89th Street, 212-423-3500, guggenheim.org. (Smith)

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International Center of Photography: ‘Capa in Color’ (through May 4) Robert Capa first worked with color in 1938, though he only began shooting regularly in color in 1941. This exhibition includes more than 100 contemporary inkjet prints, a fraction of the roughly 4,200 color transparencies held in the center’s Capa Archive. Sections of the exhibition include photographs of postwar Paris with spectators at the Longchamp racetrack, fashion models, people sitting in cafes. Black and white remained the standard for war photography as well as art during this time, however, and color during Capa’s period was still for commerce, amateurs, leisure — and stories featuring women. 1133 Avenue of the Americas, at 43rd Street, 212-857-0000, icp.org. (Martha Schwendener)

International Center of Photography: ‘What Is a Photograph?’ (through May 4) This exhibition is supposed to address a good question: What is photography in today’s digital age with its mind-boggling new smorgasbord of ways to create and disseminate machine-made images? It brings together works from the past four decades by 21 artists who have used photography to ponder the nature of photography itself. But it’s a strangely blinkered and backward-looking show. Most of what is on view has more to do with photography’s analog past than with its cybernetic future. 1133 Avenue of the Americas, at 43rd Street, 212-857-0000, icp.org. (Ken Johnson)

★ **Leslie Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art: ‘Queer Threads: Crafting Identity and Community’** (through March 16) This terrific group show posits fiber art as the ideal lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender medium, it being feminine/masculine,

high/low, and naughty/nice. There's lots of history here, beginning with a 1950s Paul Cadmus-ish needlepoint, along with same-sex-couple portraits in several media, pansies embroidered on leather, a masterpiece of shoelace macramé, a full-size crocheted locker room, and an animated cross-stitch vision of RuPaul. 26 Wooster Street, near Grand Street, SoHo, 212-431-2609, leslielohman.org. (Cotter)

Metropolitan Museum of Art: 'The American West in Bronze, 1850-1925' (through April 13) This intriguing and spiritually troubling show presents 65 mostly pedestal-scale sculptures representing standard themes of the old American West: cowboys, Indians and wild animals. It includes famous practitioners of the genre like Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell, as well as 26 others. Nearly all the sculptures are in a mode of three-dimensional illustrative realism and tend heavily to romantic idealization. There's the rub: The real history of the conquest of the West by white folks was much worse than what these artists imagined in their very popular works. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Johnson)

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Metropolitan Museum of Art: 'Antonio Canova: The Seven Last Works' (through April 27) At the end of his life Antonio Canova (1757-1822) produced this show's seven rectangular plaster reliefs for a neo-Classical church he designed and financed for his hometown, Possagno, Italy. Unlike his best known sculptures, they are not remotely erotic or even particularly sensual, and they have nothing to do with the Greek mythology. Rather, they illustrate biblical stories: four from the Book of Genesis and three revolving around the birth of Jesus. They have their moments, but on the whole it doesn't look like Christianity was a good influence on Canova's creative imagination. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Johnson)

★ **Metropolitan Museum of Art: 'Charles Marville: Photographer of Paris'** (through May 4) As an official city photographer working under Napoleon III and his controversial urban planner, Baron Haussmann, Charles Marville recorded some 425 views of narrow, picturesque streets that were to be replaced by Haussmann's grand boulevards. Familiar images from that series are among the 100 or so photographs in this show, and they will doubtless be the main draw for visitors eager for a glimpse of a bygone Paris. But the curators also explore Marville's background in illustration and what little we know of his biography. He comes across as a cleareyed cartographer who never quite let go of the illustrator's imperative to make a beautiful, cohesive picture. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Karen Rosenberg)

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★ **Metropolitan Museum of Art: 'The Flowering of Edo Period Painting: Japanese Masterworks from the Feinberg Collection'** (through Sept. 7) This museum's Japanese galleries have been pulling crowds with a recent series of theme-based exhibitions. It now takes on a different challenge: How to present a cogent narrative within the parameters of a private collection. Given the material, it would have been hard to go wrong. What a

collection this is. And what histories, new and old, it holds. Gleaming gold landscape screens, painted fans, painted views into urban brothels: The show is a magnetic beauty. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Cotter)

★ **Metropolitan Museum of Art: ‘Ink Art: Past as Present in Contemporary China’** (through April 6) This museum’s first survey of recent Chinese art uses the lens of the culture’s ancient brush and ink tradition so basic to its landscape painting and calligraphy. It doesn’t always work. The show endures a scattered installation, includes overly refined displays of empty skill and wanders off message in spots, especially with several sculptures that don’t seem to belong here. But a few moments of visual life and many interesting questions about the weight of the old on the new make it worthwhile. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Smith)

Metropolitan Museum of Art: ‘Making Pottery Art: The Robert A. Ellison Jr. Collection of French Ceramics (ca. 1880-1910)’ (through Aug. 18) Nearly all the 40 works in this show — from a collection recently donated to the museum — are in a traditional form of vases, bowls and platters. They represent a marvelous variety of styles and influences, including Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, classic Chinese traditions, and European folk art. What they share is a love for processes and materials and a candid way with the human touch. Most intriguing of all is a curiously clunky small vase by Paul Gauguin, who might have been the George Ohr of European ceramics if he’d stuck with it. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Johnson)

Metropolitan Museum of Art: ‘Piero della Francesca: Personal Encounters’ (through March 30) None of the four works in this deceptively low-impact show are among Piero della Francesca’s most celebrated. But they are all the devotional paintings for private clients Piero is known to have made, and this show is the first to bring them all together. Two picture Saint Jerome in his wilderness retreat and two portray the Madonna and Child, one of which is thought to be Piero’s earliest known painting and the other among his last. As marriages of old religious faith and new forms of empirical consciousness, they are marvelous thought provokers. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Johnson)

Metropolitan Museum of Art: ‘William Kentridge: The Refusal of Time’ (through May 11) Everything is on the move in this mini-theater-cum-power-plant of an installation. In wraparound videos, metronomes pound. Clock-faces spin, spewing trails of stars. Drawings draw and erase themselves. Maps of Africa appear and disappear. White-coated figures mix potions amid giant watch springs. At the center of the gallery a wooden contraption pumps away like an energy source. A collaboration between Mr. Kentridge, who is based in South Africa, and Peter L. Galison, a science historian at Harvard, the piece refers to the European colonial experiment, which strove to shape other cultures to its own concepts of reality, only to find that those cultures had different, resistant, assertive realities of their own. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Cotter)

★ **Morgan Library & Museum: ‘A Collective Invention: Photographs at Play’** (through May 18) An unusually effective gimmick animates this philosophically

provocative show of more than 80 photographs and photo-related works. Each piece shares a particular feature with its predecessor and with one that comes after. A collage by Ray Johnson, including a pink-hued publicity photograph of a man in a top hat, is followed by a photograph by Sandy Skoglund of a square of pink lunch meat on a yellow countertop. This might prompt alternative thinking about the usual ways of categorizing photography and art in general. 225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, 212-685-0008, themorgan.org. (Johnson)

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Morgan Library and Museum: ‘Visions and Nightmares: Four Centuries of Spanish Drawings’ (through May 11) Skipping from 16th-century church commissions to Goya in just 25 objects, the Morgan’s first show of Spanish drawings is necessarily awkward. But it delivers on the promise of its title, serving up heavenly apparitions and wicked phantasms aplenty. Highlights include a red chalk drawing of the satyr Marsyas by José de Ribera, an “Immaculate Conception” by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, several late Goya drawings, and a lavishly illustrated 1780 edition of “Don Quixote.” 225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, 212-685-0008, themorgan.org. (Rosenberg)

★ **Museum of Arts and Design: ‘Out of Hand: Materializing the Postdigital’** (through June 1) If you haven’t quite wrapped your head around the concept of 3-D printing, or haven’t yet had a digital scanner wrap itself around you, now you can do both in this survey of computer-assisted art, architecture and design. The show looks at art made since 2005 and fills nearly three floors, including many irresistible interactive projects. Its ideas may not be entirely new; the Museum of Modern Art’s 2008 exhibition “Design and the Elastic Mind” covered much of the same territory, but there’s something to be said for this more down-to-earth, production-focused exhibition. 2 Columbus Circle, 212-299-7777, madmuseum.org. (Rosenberg)

★ **Museum of Modern Art: ‘A World of Its Own: Photographic Practices in the Studio’** (through Oct. 5) This most lively if repetitive overview traces the history of photography as the Modern never has — with images taken in the studio rather than out in the world. Its roughly 180 works span 160 years and represent some 90 portraitists, commercial photographers, lovers of still life, darkroom experimenters, Conceptual artists and several generations of postmodernists. Including film and video, it offers much to look at, but dwells too much in the past, becoming increasingly blinkered and cautious as it approaches the present. 212-708-9400, moma.org. (Smith)

Museum of Modern Art: ‘Designing Modern Women 1890-1990’ (through Sept. 21) Shoehorned into half the museum’s design department, this conversation-starting display of objects from MoMA’s permanent collection features items designed by more than 60 women, many of whom worked with male partners. Some, like Marianne Brandt and Eileen Gray, are well known to design aficionados, but most will be unfamiliar to a general audience. Most objects were created for domestic consumption. The pièce de résistance is a kitchen designed by Charlotte Perriand for the apartments in Le Corbusier’s Unité d’Habitation in Marseille, France. 212-708-9400, moma.org. (Johnson)

Museum of Modern Art: ‘Ileana Sonnabend: Ambassador for the New’ (through April 21) Ileana Sonnabend, who died in 2007 at 92, was one of the most foresighted art dealers of the late 20th century. This modest-size exhibition, made up of work she either owned or showed in her gallery, gives a sense of the range of her interests, from Jasper Johns to Jeff Koons. 212-708-9400, moma.org. (Cotter)

Museum of the City of New York: ‘City as Canvas: Graffiti Art from the Martin Wong Collection’ (through Aug. 24) Drawn from a collection of graffiti-related materials assembled by the artist Martin Wong, this fascinating show and its indispensable catalog chronicle the rise and fall of the calligraphic, illegal art form known as “wild style” graffiti in New York in the 1970s and ’80s. Presenting about 150 paintings, drawings, sketchbooks and documentary photographs, it features works by most of the underground movement’s stars, including Daze (given name Chris Ellis), Dondi (Donald White), Futura 2000 (Leonard McGurr) and Lady Pink (Sandra Fabara). Fifth Avenue at 103rd Street, 212-534-1672, mcny.org. (Johnson)

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Museum of the City of New York: ‘Gilded New York’ (continuing) This period-piece of a show revolves around the ritual of the fancy-dress ball: an occasion for lavish expenditures by both host and guests. The gallery, upholstered in eggplant-colored brocade and stuffed with silver and porcelain, could serve as a set for the latest Wharton adaptation or Julian Fellowes’s much-anticipated American follow-up to “Downton Abbey.” Two mannequins wearing evening dresses by Maison Worth of Paris have been posed conversationally before a fireplace surround of Italian marble; one of them is clad in the sparkling “Electric Light” dress, festooned with silver bullion, worn by Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt II at the Vanderbilt Ball of 1883. In the catalog, and just outside the gallery, photographs show guests at other balls dressed (with no apparent irony) as kings, queens and courtiers from Versailles. Fifth Avenue at 103rd Street, 212-534-1672, mcny.org. (Rosenberg)

★ **New Museum: ‘Pawel Althamer: The Neighbors’** (through April 13) The work of this Polish artist includes influences from church art, European folk art and community activism — things that the mainstream New York art world doesn’t know or care much about. But this show makes a stirring impression, particularly the early figure sculptures made from ceramics, wax and grass. A gallery in which visitors are invited to draw on the walls is a work in progress, with Mr. Althamer sometimes on hand for consultation. 235 Bowery, at Prince Street, Lower East Side, 212-219-1222, newmuseum.org. (Cotter)

Queens Museum of Art: Peter Schumann ‘The Shatterer’ (through March 30) A recent expansion has doubled the size of this museum, and one of its first new shows is the large and moving solo museum debut of Mr. Schumann, the founder and director of Bread and Puppet Theater, which is now 50 years old. The show demonstrates how thoroughly Bread and Puppet is his creation. Its down-value look and activist ethos are evident in everything, including the black house-paint mural he has brushed, single-handedly, across one of the museum’s wall and the hand-printed, hand-bound books he

has placed in the gallery he designates as chapel and library. Every inch of this room is covered with figures and words: angels and ogres, exhortations and condemnations, art for one and for all, straight from the hand, right to the moral core. Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, 718-592-9700, queensmuseum.org. (Cotter)

★ **Studio Museum in Harlem: ‘Carrie Mae Weems: The Museum Series’** (through June 29) A set of recent pictures by Carrie Mae Weems are on view here as a supplement to the Guggenheim Museum’s “Carrie Mae Weems: Three Decades of Photography and Video” exhibition. These images show the artist dwarfed by the facades of international art institutions — the Louvre, the Tate Modern, and so on — which, to quote the Studio Museum news release, “affirm or reject certain histories through their collecting or display decisions. 144 West 125th Street, Harlem, 212-864-4500, studiomuseum.org. (Cotter)

Galleries: Chelsea

★ **Candy Jernigan** Of all the artworks made in the East Village during the 1980s, few reflect that environment with as much unsentimental wit as Candy Jernigan’s drawings and assemblages. Ms. Jernigan (1952-91) cataloged crack vials she found on the street and took Polaroids of bloodstains on the pavement. She also drew New York dietary staples like Sabrett hot dogs and cans of Goya beans, often adding small maps to show where in the city these foodstuffs had been purchased. A small survey of her work from the 1980s, at Greene Naftali makes you sad that Ms. Jernigan, who died of liver cancer at 39, isn’t around to respond to the thoroughly gentrified East Village of today. 508 West 26th Street, Chelsea, 212-463-7770, greenenaftaligallery.com. (Rosenberg)

★ **‘Re-View: Onnasch Collection’** (through April 12) This show more faithfully simulates the experience of seeing art in a modern art museum than any private gallery exhibition in recent memory. Installed in a sequence of 11 whitewall rooms in a gymnasium-size space, the show’s 57 works dating mainly from the 1950s to the ’80s are from a collection assembled by Reinhard Onnasch, a German art dealer. All of the 27 artists — from the Abstract Expressionist Franz Kline to the Minimalist Richard Serra — will be known to anyone familiar with post-[World War II](#) art. Nearly all are represented by choice examples. Hauser & Wirth, 511 West 18th Street, 212-790-3900, hauserwirth.com. (Johnson)

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Beverly Semmes (through March 15) Ms. Semmes is known for making giant garments that engulf figures or entire galleries. In “FRP,” short for “The Feminist Responsibility Project,” she has drawn and painted over images of women published in pornography magazines. What she leaves blank, amid these colorful, blobby abstractions, are the grasping hands, supplicating eyes, or sharp stiletto heels we associate with pornographic images (and performances). The works hark back to Dada photomontage, Surrealism, Odilon Redon, or Francisco Goya, slyly inverting concepts like censorship, defacement and “defilement,” putting power into the hands of an artist who offers a cunning creative

remix. Susan Inglett, 522 West 24th Street, 212-647-9111, inglettgallery.com. (Schwendener)

Richard Serra: ‘New Sculpture’ (through March 15) In this show, Richard Serra continues along the road that emerged from the hugely successful “Torqued Ellipses” of the 1990s, but also circles back to his earlier oeuvre. Here you have the Serra of the ’60s and ’70s, revised and updated: heavy rectilinear plates and cubes fabricated in steel rather than lead, his signature material in the ’60s. 555 West 24th Street, 212-741-1111, gagosian.com. (Schwendener)

Galleries: Other

★ **Simon Dinnerstein: ‘The Fulbright Triptych’** (through March 31) This little-known masterpiece of 1970s realism was begun by the young Simon Dinnerstein during a Fulbright fellowship in Germany in 1971 and completed in his hometown, Brooklyn, three years later. Incorporating carefully rendered art postcards, children’s drawings and personal memorabilia; a formidable worktable laid out with printmaking tools and outdoor views; and the artist and his family, it synthesizes portrait, still life, interior and landscape and rummages through visual culture while sampling a dazzling range of textures and representational styles. It should be seen by anyone interested in the history of recent art and its oversights. German Consulate General, 871 United Nations Plaza, First Avenue, at 49th Street, 212-610-9700, germany.info/nyevents. (Smith)

★ **Red Grooms: ‘Beware a Wolf in the Alley’** (through March 23) On entering the gallery, visitors immediately are plunged into a funky-expressionist re-creation of an alley between brick buildings with inward leaning walls and sooty, dimly back-lighted windows, which leads you into a room painted and furnished to resemble a children’s theater. Here you may watch Mr. Grooms’s 16-minute film “Little Red Riding Hood” (1978), a funny, ultra-low budget retelling of the fairy tale starring the artist’s daughter Saskia and other friends and family members. This is Mr. Grooms’s best gallery show in years. Marlborough Broome Street, 331 Broome Street, Lower East Side, 212-219-8926, marlboroughchelsea.com. (Johnson)

★ **‘An Opening of the Field: Jess, Robert Duncan, and Their Circle’** (through March 29) If you were young, gifted and odd, San Francisco was a good place to be in the years after World War II, when big changes were brewing in American art and culture. And this show feels like a chunk of Bay Area turf has been lifted from back then and set down, untrimmed and buzzing, in the New York of now. At its center are two gay men, the poet Robert Duncan (1919-88) and the artist Jess Collins (who went by the single name Jess). Committed partners living in a wonderland of an old house filled to roof with art, they gathered a fascinating creative community around them, and a lot of it shows up here. Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 100 Washington Square East, Greenwich Village, 212-998-6780, nyu.edu/greyart. (Cotter)

Out of Town

★ **Carnegie Museum of Art: 2013 Carnegie International** (through March 16) A welcome shock to the system of one of the art world's more entrenched rituals, this lean, seemingly modest, thought-out exhibition takes the big global survey of contemporary art off steroids. It is mostly devoid of the looming, often expensive installations called "festival art," while evincing a gratifying affinity for color, form, beauty and pleasure, and a discernible lack of interest in finger-wagging didacticism. Object-making of all kinds seems healthy, as do artist-initiated activist projects (which sometimes overlap). Interventionist and artist-as-curator efforts? Not as impressive. 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, 412-622-3131, carnegieinternational.org. (Smith)

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★ **Neuberger Museum of Art: 'Forrest Bess: Seeing Things Invisible'** (through May 18) Bess's small but potent paintings respond to the art world's "either-ors" with a resounding "and." Without resorting to big stretches of canvas or brash gestures, they merge inner and outer worlds, abstraction and representation, and ideas of masculinity and femininity. This exhibition, organized by the Menil Collection, embraces his life and work in its sometimes messy totality. Building on a small exhibition of Bess's paintings and writings that was folded into the 2012 Whitney Biennial, it does not shy away from either the complexities of his art or the painful details of his biography. Purchase College, State University of New York, 735 Anderson Hill Road, Purchase, N.Y., 914-251-6100, neuberger.org. (Rosenberg)

★ **Philadelphia Museum of Art: Michael Snow: 'Photo-Centric'** (through April 27) The director of the famous experimental film "Wavelength" hasn't had a museum show of his photography since 1976, when the Museum of Modern Art gave him a small "Projects" exhibition. "Michael Snow: Photo-Centric" gives us a long overdue look at his work in the medium — starting with projects from the 1960s that overlap with film and performance and continuing to supersize staged color prints that reflect photo trends of the early 2000s. Many of the works are as rigorously structural as his films, but are also, surprisingly, quite playful. In "Crouch, Leap, Land" (1970), visitors must squat beneath the artwork to see the three serial photos of a jumping nude (shot through a Plexiglas floor from a similarly low vantage point). Benjamin Franklin Parkway at 26th Street, 215-763-8100, philamuseum.org. (Rosenberg)

Last Chance

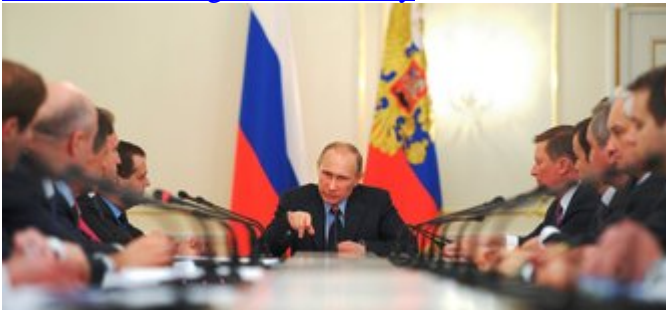
★ **David Altmejd: 'Juices'** (closes on Saturday) A lot is going on in "The Flux and the Puddle," the ambitious, labyrinthine sculpture that dominates Mr. Altmejd's latest solo exhibition. Within a complex of mirrors and Plexiglas that nearly fills the main gallery, werewolves and birdmen perform nightmarish surgeries and excavations atop pits of plaster and puddles of gooey resin. Rows of ants are on the march, ready to attack decayed flesh or rotting fruit (all of it synthetic and adorned with crystals and sequins). It's a rich, intricately networked ecosystem, though it feels as if Mr. Altmejd could push himself still further out of his camp-Goth comfort zone. Andrea Rosen, 525 West 24th Street, Chelsea, 212-627-6000, andrearosengallery.com. (Rosenberg)

★ **‘American Folk Art’** (closes on Saturday) For a glimpse of old, weird America, consider this wonderfully spooky selection of paintings, sculptures, furniture and curiosities dating from 1830 to 1930 and mostly by unknown artists. It includes a picture of a woman in a black-lace-trimmed dress by the great itinerant portrait painter Ammi Phillips; a life-size wooden dog painted black that looks as if it just leapt out of a drawing by Bill Traylor; a walking stick whose upper end is carved into a hand holding an orange ball; and a sex toy representing a naked amorous couple in the act. Edward Thorp, 210 11th Avenue, at 24th Street, 212-691-6565, edwardthorpgallery.com. (Johnson)

Guy Ben Ner (closes on Saturday) “Soundtrack” (2013), the centerpiece of this show, takes a scene from Steven Spielberg’s 2005 movie “War of the Worlds” as a “ready-made” soundtrack and pairs it with footage shot in Mr. Ben Ner’s kitchen in Tel Aviv. Like Tom Cruise’s character in that movie, Mr. Ben Ner’s children from his first marriage play a pivotal role in “Soundtrack,” billed alongside the cute baby from his second marriage. The artist’s family situation would be none of our business except that we’ve literally watched his kids grow up in his oeuvre. In that sense, “Soundtrack” serves as an art analogue to “War of the Worlds” in which familial bliss is ruptured and plays itself out on embattled ground. Postmasters, 54 Franklin Street, TriBeCa, 212-727-3323, postmastersart.com. (Schwendener)

★ **Brooklyn Museum: ‘Wangechi Mutu: A Fantastic Journey’** (closes on Sunday) For the past decade and a half, Wangechi Mutu, born in Kenya and based in New York, has been producing large-scale figurative collages as politically nuanced as they are ravishing. Since she first started to show them in the late 1990s, they have grown more complex and detailed, and we’re seeing them at what has to be some kind of peak moment in this pithy traveling survey. 200 Eastern Parkway, at Prospect Park, 718-638-5000, brooklynmuseum.org. (Cotter)

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Metropolitan Museum of Art: ‘Jewels by JAR’ (closes on Sunday) Crowd-pleasers needn’t represent lowered curatorial standards in terms of subject and execution, but this one does. It packs 400 efforts by the New York-born, Paris-based high-society jeweler, Joel Arthur Rosenthal (JAR), into a very dark gallery with insufficient labeling or historical backup. Large pave brooches, usually of flowers, abound; too many pieces date from 2010 or later. There are certainly redeeming works, but the show cries out for editing, scholarly support and better viewing conditions. Artist and audience are left hanging, with the museum’s mercenary agenda in full view. 212-535-7710, metmuseum.org. (Smith)

★ **Museum of Modern Art: Isa Genzken: ‘Retrospective’** (closes on Monday) This prolific German sculptor — for whom New York and its skyscrapers are a major source of inspiration — receives her first comprehensive museum survey in this country. A grand, glamorous and sometimes grating 40-year overview, it traces her progress from idiosyncratic Minimalist monoliths to the distinctive — often architectonic — assemblages she began making in 1997 from cheesy materials and objects. These works concoct a raw, unapologetic beauty and a weirdly elliptical, if literal-minded, social commentary, frequently about the United States, power and war. 212-708-9400, moma.org. (Smith)

★ **Museum of Modern Art: ‘Walker Evans: American Photographs’** (closes on Sunday) In 1938, the Museum of Modern Art mounted its first one-person photography exhibition: “American Photographs,” by Walker Evans. This gripping, 75th-anniversary reprise of that show presents more than 50 images from that body of work. It is accompanied by a reissue of the original catalog, which includes a wonderfully insightful essay by Evans’s friend and supporter Lincoln Kirstein. Together, the show and the book reverberate now in a time when the idea of America is subject to debates as fractious and far-reaching as at any time since the Civil War. 212-708-9400, moma.org. (Johnson)

New-York Historical Society: ‘Beauty’s Legacy: Gilded Age Portraits in America’ (closes on Sunday) Rich in context and character-driven, this show of society portraits from the Gilded Age offers plenty of information on the New York social set known as Mrs. Astor’s 400. Highlights include Théobald Chartran’s painting of James Hazen Hyde, the Equitable Insurance Company heir whose come-hither stare is conspicuously modeled on Bronzino’s “Portrait of a Young Man,” and watercolor-on-ivory miniatures from the collection of Peter Marié that show society women in costume from the latest ball. 170 Central Park West, at 77th Street, 212-873-3400, nyhistory.org. (Rosenberg)

★ **Studio Museum in Harlem: ‘The Shadows Took Shape’** (closes on Sunday) Space is definitely the place in this lively group exhibition devoted to Afrofuturism, a contemporary art trend that takes the ultra-free-jazz musician Sun Ra as its patron saint and locates itself in a universe where racial and ethnic identities float free from

stereotypes without losing track of the histories that created them. William Villalongo sets African sculpture and modernist painting soaring together among the stars; the Kenyan artist Wanuri Kahiu films ecological cataclysm and renewal in ages to come; William Cordova, who lives in New York and Lima, Peru, recreates the Millennium Falcon from “Star Wars,” now equipped with a cultural studies library. 144 West 125th Street, 212-864-4500, studiomuseum.org. (Cotter)