

Cyprien Gaillard, "Today Diggers, Tomorrow Dickens"

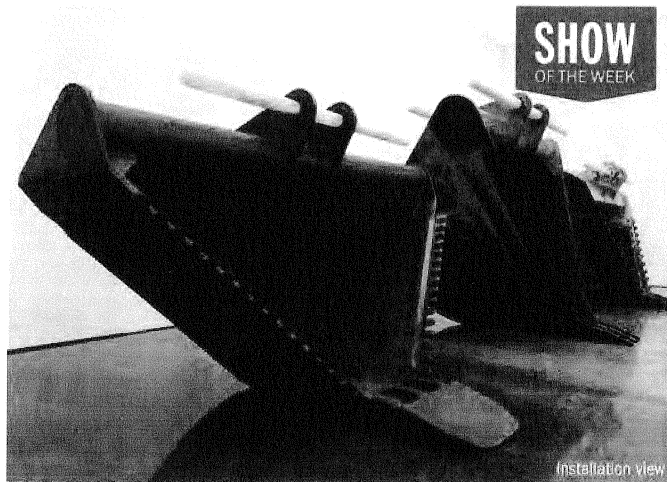
★★★★★

Gladstone Gallery, through Jan 30 (see Chelsea)

I read somewhere once that millions of years from now, long after mankind has vanished, our entire existence as a species will register in the geological record as a band of sediment less than one inch thick. That humbling thought occurred to me while visiting Cyprien Gaillard's latest show.

Generally, I'm wary of the sort of work whose grandeur conforms comfortably to the tastes and inflated self-image of the globalist overlords who buy art. Also, I find the French sense of irony gratingly overdetermined at times. Both of these qualities are evident in this young Gallic artist's output, yet I like it all the same, because Gaillard gets to our essential hubris about our place on earth.

This is especially true of the centerpiece installation: an impressive array of shovels, buckets, plows and blades from the front ends of earthmoving



machines. Ranging from compact to massive, and bristling with serrated teeth worthy of a T. Rex, these objects represent the literal cutting edge of our planetary transformation. They embody capitalism's creative destruction in all of its engineered glory.

Of course, the carbon footprint of appropriating these readymades

on steroids was hardly small, but that may be part of Gaillard's point. Everyone, he seems to be saying, overlooks the wages of globalism, blinded as we are by the conveniences it affords. —Howard Halle

THE BOTTOM LINE A Gallic take on heavy metal.

Museums & Institutions

◀ **Brooklyn Museum** 200 Eastern Pkwy at Washington Ave, Prospect Heights, Brooklyn (718-638-5000, brooklynmuseum.org). Subway: 2, 3 to Eastern Pkwy–Brooklyn Museum. Wed, Fri–Sun 11am–6pm; Thu 11am–10pm. Suggested donation \$12, seniors and students \$8, children under 12 free. First Saturday of every month 5–11pm free.

* **"Behind Closed Doors: Art in the Spanish American Home, 1492–1898"** The good life as led by the elites in Spain's New World colonial empire is the subject of this roundup of fine-art objects and furnishings. Through Sun 12.

* **"Wangechi Mutu: A Fantastic Journey"** Although she employs a number of artistic mediums, Wangechi Mutu is best-known for large-scale collages on Mylar, depicting chimerical female figures that are part plant, part animal and part human. Through Mar 9.

* **"WAR/PHOTOGRAPHY: Images of Armed Conflict and Its Aftermath"** The relationship between war and photography is the subject of this survey, covering 166 years of military history. Through Feb 2.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum 1071 Fifth Ave at 89th St (212-423-3500, guggenheim.org). Subway: 4, 5, 6 to 86th St. Mon–Wed, Fri, Sun 10am–5:45pm; Sat 10am–7:45pm. \$22, seniors and students with ID \$18, members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult free. Sat 5:45–7:45pm pay what you wish.

* **Christopher Wool** The painter gets the run of the Guggenheim rotunda in this survey of his 30-year career. Through Jan 22.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art 1000 Fifth Ave at 82nd St (212-535-7710, metmuseum.org). Subway: 4, 5, 6 to 86th St. Mon–Thu, Sun 10am–5:30pm; Fri, Sat 10am–9pm. Suggested donation \$25, seniors \$17, students \$12, members and children under 12 free.

* **"Ink Art: Past as Present in Contemporary China"** The 35 contemporary Chinese artists in this exhibition have all, in one way or the next, found a model for their work in some aspect of China's rich cultural legacy. Through Apr 6.

* **"Piero della Francesca: Personal Encounters"** The Met displays four paintings by Renaissance master Piero della

Tony Feher, "Encore"



★★★★★

Sikkema Jenkins & Co., through Sat 18 (see Chelsea)

The subject of a traveling retrospective currently on view at the Bronx Museum, Tony Feher

creates sublime sculptures out of throwaway items, ranging from crushed beer cans and plastic soda crates to mop handles and flattened cardboard boxes. For his latest show, Feher stays true to his poetic, minimalist style of DIY art.

Two shelves holding bottles of blue water evoke a consumerist vision of sea and sky, while two pieces of oil-stained plywood with a prominent grain suggest stretches of desert. In contrast, two other pieces (one made with strands of yellow nylon twine, the other with lengths of rope beaded with short segments of PVC tubing in orange and blue) are hung from steel pipes like necklaces, recalling large abstract paintings. So does *Parlour Trix*, a curtain of steel chains festooned with pastel-colored glass vases, goblets and candy dishes. In the final gallery, examples of similar glassware are strapped to wooden studs. Leaning against the walls like John McCracken sculptures, these pared-down assemblages join Feher's extensive body of work to poke fun at modern art while smartly advancing its history. —Paul Laster

THE BOTTOM LINE Feher creates minimalist poetry out of junk.

Francesca, showing them together for the first time. The works, all featuring religious subjects, were originally created as objects for private devotion. Through Mar 30.

* **"Silla: Korea's Golden Kingdom"** The Met throws its own version of a glitter bomb with this show of spectacular treasures from the ancient Korean kingdom of Silla (57 B.C.–A.D. 935), which was renowned for its craftsmen working in gold. Through Feb 23.

Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)

11 W 53rd St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-708-9400, moma.org). Subway: B, D, F, M to 47–50th Sts–Rockefeller Ctr; E, M to Fifth Ave–53rd St. Mon–Thu, Sat, Sun 10:30am–5:30pm; Fri 10:30am–8pm. \$25, seniors \$18, students \$14, children under 16 free. For discounts, order your tickets in advance online at moma.org. Fri 4–8pm free. Film tickets free with museum admission; screenings only admission \$12, seniors \$10, students \$8, children under 16 free. * **"American Modern: Hopper to O'Keeffe"** Davis, Edward Hopper,

Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Sheeler, Alfred Stieglitz and Andrew Wyeth are among the artists whose works are surveyed here. Through Jan 26.

* **"Walker Evans American Photographs"** This show celebrates the 75th anniversary of Walker Evans's 1938 exhibition at MoMA with a reprise of that show. Through Jan 26.

* **"Isa Genzken: Retrospective"** MoMA surveys the four-decade career of Genzken, one of the most prominent figures within the postwar generation of German artists. Through Mar 10.

Whitney Museum of American Art 945 Madison Ave at 75th St (212-570-3600, whitney.org). Subway: 6 to 77th St. Wed, Thu, Sat, Sun 11am–6pm; Fri 1–9pm. \$20; seniors, adults 19–25 and students \$16; 18 and under free.

* **"Edward Steichen in the 1920s and 1930s: A Recent Acquisiton"** Steichen's work for Condé Nast figures prominently in this collection of photos recently donated to the Whitney. Through Feb 23.

Galleries

Uptown/Madison Avenue & vicinity

Subways: N, Q, R to Lexington Ave–59th St; 4, 5, 6 to 59th or 86th Sts; 6 to 68th St–Hunter College or 77th St.

Gagosian Gallery 980 Madison Ave between 76th and 77th Sts (212-744-2313, gagosian.com). Tue–Sat 10am–6pm.

* **"Richard Artschwager: No More Running Man"** For more than 50 years, the work of Richard Artschwager (who died last year at age 89), has resisted categorization, and the objects in this show are no exception. They represent the last of an ongoing series in which the artist employed the same enigmatic silhouette of a seemingly armless figure, apparently running for some reason. In fact, it's based on a newspaper photo Artschwager clipped out back in 1988 from *The Boston Globe*, showing a man hurrying along the

street on a cold day with his hands stuffed in his pockets—serving as yet another instance of Artschwager's ability to transform the everyday into something odd, unsettling and vaguely unreal. Through Feb 22.

* **Y.Z. Kami, "Paintings"** The Iranian artist is well-known for portrait paintings whose stylistic qualities—direct yet nebulous in a somehow otherworldly manner—have often been compared to the Fayum mummy portraits of Ancient Egypt under Roman rule. As if to underscore the hint of spirituality imbued by these works, Kami's latest show presents them alongside paintings of praying hands, as well as canvases that depict overhead views of a tiled domed ceiling (from a temple or mosque, perhaps) illuminated by sunlight streaming through a central oculus. Thu 16–Feb 22.

Hauser & Wirth New York 32 E 69th St between Madison and Park Aves (212-794-4970, hauserwirth.com). Tue–Sat 10am–6pm.

* **"Josephsohn"** See Critics' Picks.

Art

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