

ON OUR RADAR

FAWN KRIEGER

A sculptor makes wearable alternatives

“MY CONSTRUCTIONS ARE experiments in holding materialist, feminist, and socialist ideals simultaneously,” says New York-based Krieger of her approach. “I’m interested in what alternate economies can look and feel like.” In 2007, she opened her first exhibition-as-commercial-enterprise at Art in General, a store selling ironic facsimiles of everyday objects that doubled as a collaborative stage for performative transactions. “I’m drawn to moments where audience inadvertently become performers,” Krieger explains, “but not in a manipulative way—in an inclusive, ecstatic way.” Drawing from Cold War-era consumer practices, she revisits this approach for “Outfit,” opening at **Soloway** in Brooklyn this month, where she will premiere a line of genderless work wear. Turning the gallery space into a boutique—a move that also raises the question, she notes, of “how we participate in gentrification, as visual artists, as intellectuals, as workers, as communities, as institutions”—her line will include two prototypes: an oversize black tunic and a jumpsuit. Once the show closes, the collection will move to mail order.

While the clothing items themselves may seem impersonal in their modularity, “Outfit” is attentive to experiences of intimacy within this constructed economy. Krieger designs and produces each piece of apparel in her own living space: “I felt a desire to respond to this materially by working with supplies and technical processes that have a direct history with labor in the home,” she says. The garments will also be displayed on oversize sculptural

Fawn Krieger

Individuals wearing clothing prototypes for apparel in “Outfit,” an upcoming show at Soloway.

hangers adorned with faces, “quiet portraits” of friends. “They’re a gesture at audience-making,” she says, “a tapestry of witnesses I love.” —THEA BALLARD



INSPIRATIONS

RON NAGLE’S MORANDI WORSHIP

An Italian master whispers to an American ceramicist

“I don’t think he was a yuk-yuk funny guy,” says quirky ceramics master Ron Nagle when I ask if he imagines **Giorgio Morandi** shared his oddball sense of humor. “But when someone comes back with a quick retort, very understated but profound, that, to me, is a form of humor, and he had that.” I had called to discuss a happy coincidence: Just as Nagle’s solo show at Matthew Marks Gallery in New York closed, an exhibition on Morandi—somewhat counterintuitively, his greatest admitted influence—opened at the **Center for Italian Modern Art in New York**, where it remains on view through June 25.

It wasn’t love at first sight, Nagle admits, having been introduced to Morandi’s paintings via slide projection. “Seeing it in books is what got me converted completely,” he says. “In retrospect, it has to do with the scale that I feel most comfortable working at.” But it could also be that to see more than one Morandi painting is to understand his commitment. His bottles

are burdened with the bourgeois categorization of the still life. Over a span of 50 years, these simple objects got shuffled around a bare tabletop: first lined up as if accused, during the war years paraded off-frame like an army, and ultimately, huddled absurdly at the canvas’s center, bound tight like white Italian asparagus.

Nagle finds camaraderie in Morandi’s knack for putting what’s meant to be functional to alternative use. He views the artist as a precursor to the modern ceramic movement: “It wasn’t about the pot. It was about the pot as a format for expression.” But he insists, “I’m sure he could have done it with any form. My main thing for him is the *feel*.” Morandi’s strokes double back on themselves in currents that leave behind a surface unkempt, like fur in wind. About his own diminutive sculptures, Nagle says, “If I can capture that feel, which is looser, more unassuming, in the work, which is very labor-intensive, I’m happy.”

The Temperamentalist is Nagle’s most straightforward tribute to the Italian painter. A gleaming golden shape sneaks between two monoliths of stucco gray. There, as in Morandi’s best work, the border is an entity unto itself. There’s friction where things meet, in that living edge not inherent to each object. Morandi’s bouquets of vessels cast ambiguous shadows. “He’s fooling the audience,” says Nagle, who, working in three dimensions, can afford more outlandish inventions while remaining beholden to gravity.

The two artists measure equidistant from what’s easily recognizable, creating enigmas tied to a tabletop. But Nagle asserts, “Morandi did it better than anybody, because those paintings are magic! They have a presence about them, without being bombastic. At a time when people like Kline and de Kooning and Pollock were making big, powerful paintings, here’s a guy who could do it with a whisper.”

—SARAH COWAN

Ron Nagle’s *The Temperamentalist*, 2015, above left, with Giorgio Morandi’s *Still Life*, 1963.

FROM LEFT: FAWN KRIEGER; RON NAGLE AND MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY; NEW YORK; ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY; NEW YORK AND SIAE; ROME



Sarah Cowan

Brooklyn-based Cowan works as a video editor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and has contributed to *The Paris Review* and the online art forum Hyperallergic. She spoke to Ron Nagle, on page 34, about his admiration for fellow artist Giorgio Morandi on the occasion of their two respective shows overlapping in New York last fall. “Nagle speaks of Morandi with touching reverence and unique insight. Comparing their work dusts off Morandi’s canvases and casts Nagle’s sculptures in historical light,” says Cowan.

“Morandi is one of my longtime loves, and he’s an artist whose work is arcane enough that it’s always exciting to find fellow admirers.”



Hunter Braithwaite

For this issue, Braithwaite, a *Modern Painters* contributing editor, traveled to Wuzhen, China, for the opening of the Mu Xin Museum, an institution he profiles on page 68, and also spoke with artist John Miller on page 31 on the occasion of his first American museum retrospective at ICA Miami. Cofounder of the magazine the *Miami Rail*, Braithwaite has a current fascination with the connections between experimental and noise music of the 1980s and 1990s rap coming out of Memphis, where the writer is based.

“The Mu Xin Museum raises interesting questions about how China is using art to navigate the darker elements of its history.”



Noelle Bodick

A reporter for Blouinartinfo.com, Bodick previously served as an assistant editor at *ArtAsiaPacific* magazine in Hong Kong and lived there during the time Laura Poitras, whom she interviews on page 74, was in the city filming Edward Snowden for her Academy Award–winning documentary, *Citizenfour*. Bodick spoke with the artist and filmmaker in her Manhattan studio about her exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art, on view through May 1, which “blurs the line between journalism and art, detaining visitors in the museum and displaying portions of the Snowden archive.”

“I’m drawn to art that, broadly speaking, reflects on history and memory.”



Ariela Gittlen

A graphic designer and writer, Brooklyn-based Gittlen is a regular contributor to *Elephant* magazine. On page 60, she profiles artist Sara Cwynar, whose use of commercial photography struck a chord. “These images exert a massive influence over our desires,” Gittlen says. “It’s hard not to view them cynically, but Cwynar has such affection for her subjects, she makes it easy to understand why they matter.”

“Looking at the transcript, I noticed Cwynar and I used the word *love* more than a dozen times—the color mint green, Maggie Nelson’s writing, and process stories among the beloved items.”



Camilo Fuentealba

Canadian and Chilean photographer Fuentealba has lived in Melbourne and Montreal and is now based in New York. With a focus on portraits as well as candid photographs, his work was short-listed for the Photobook Melbourne 2015 Photography Award, and he recently released his first photo book, *Shanghai 24*. A portfolio of the work that has taken Fuentealba around the world—from the tar sands of Northern Alberta to the streets of Bali, Shanghai, and Australia—can be found on page 79.

“Street photography is to me what music is to a dancer.”