

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum

"Pergamon and the Hellenistic Kingdoms of the Ancient World"

Closed for renovations until 2019, Berlin's Pergamon Museum has sent the Met its greatest marbles and effigies from the centuries after Alexander the Great, resulting in this epic study of how Greek ideas and images were transmitted and transformed in western Asia. The city of Pergamon (present-day Bergama, Turkey) was the capital of the Attalid dynasty, whose power in the third and second centuries B.C. was expressed through a new style of art, less idealistic and more baroque than its Athenian counterpart. A towering, ten-foot-tall statue of Athena, now armless, shows the scale of Pergamon's new artistic ambitions. Even the smaller works convey the shifts in regional power: a delicate terra-cotta statuette of a victorious athlete has the washboard abs and strong thighs of the Greek original on which it

was based, but the figure was elongated for Asian tastes. The transition from Athenian restraint to Hellenistic luxury comes through in a display of opulent jewelry, including a gold diadem topped by a figure of Nike. War, too, offered a pretext for Pergamon's artists to Hellenize a dying Gaul, seen bleeding from his abdomen. More than a mere blockbuster, this show is a radical and wholly rewarding rethinking of the art we call "Greek." *Through July 17.*

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Joe Bradley

The ambitious American painter, who shot to prominence ten years ago with patchy monochromes and slapdash primitivism, settles into mid-career with clever new abstract paintings. On flag-proportioned canvases, imperfect circles of gray and green jostle against fields of primary colors, Adolph Gottlieb-style; red bleeds through beneath washes of black, evidence of trial and error. Several cartoonish

works on paper (a screaming chicken) and some ghastly sculpture (a worn-out boot) are here for those who miss Bradley's bad manners, but the rumbling paintings, echoing with confidence and the effort of invention, affirm that he has far more serious goals than disarray. *Through May 3. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 212-744-2313.)*

Richard Learoyd

The British photographer rigged up a camera obscura in his studio for these idiosyncratic portraits that convey a preternatural sense of depth. Young women pose in an empty, pale-gray space, their faces often turned away from the camera's meticulous appraisal. Learoyd's figures appear so lifelike it's as if they were trapped inside the pictures. This immediacy, which does not translate when the images are reproduced, is remarkably seductive in person, but its impact is undercut by the awkward formality of the models' poses and by Learoyd's penchant for repetition to the point of redundancy. *Through April 30. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)*

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Sharon Core

The photographer, who kicked off her career with pictures that painstakingly re-created Wayne Thiebaud's pastries, continues to pilfer from paintings. In her new series, she took inspiration from seventeenth-century Dutch scenes of forest floors, for which she cultivated botanical specimens in a greenhouse. For all their exquisite artifice, Core's new pictures revel in decay and wildness. Snails slither across bright, wet leaves; pink flowers collapse in a pile of petals; a toad peers from the shadows, camouflaged in the dirt. *Through May 7. (Richardson, 525 W. 22nd St. 646-230-9610.)*

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Yve Laris Cohen

When Hurricane Sandy struck, the surging waters flooded the basement of the Westbeth artists' complex and destroyed much of the archive (including sets) of the Martha Graham Dance Company, which had just taken up residence there. Laris Cohen, a young artist whose work revolves around dance, is reconstructing one of Graham's lost sets, which was designed by Isamu Noguchi for the 1958 ballet "Embattled Garden." Throughout the run of the show, the artist performs; one recent afternoon, Laris Cohen was cutting wood into the sinuous forms designed by Noguchi. By the show's end, Noguchi's set will be movingly, if imperfectly, reconstituted; for now, each orphaned part on the floor is a theatrical memento mori. *Through May 15. (Company, 88 Eldridge St. 646-756-4547.)*

Jessi Reaves

"Meaning is use," Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote. This young American artist clearly agrees, as she dissolves the distinction between sculpture and furniture. (Imagine Matthew Barney and Mika Rottenberg collaborating on a project for Design Within Reach.) A plywood shelf is sheathed in a vinyl wetsuit; rolls of yellowed upholstery foam are bolted together into a makeshift couch. Isamu Noguchi's signature table, with its ovoid glass top and curved wood base, is reimagined with two doors of a Jeep Grand Cherokee, and to make the surface level Reaves has shimmed one with glue and sawdust. The coldness of modernism takes on the warmth of bodies, and quotation becomes, in Reaves's formation, not just sincere but erotic. *Through June 5. (Donahue, 99 Bowery. 646-896-1368.)*



Billy Sullivan's spirited pastel portrait "Cookie" (2016) is on view at the Kaufmann Repetto gallery.