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**Stewart Uoo**

"Curtains", installation view at 47 Canal, New York (2016)  
 Courtesy of 47 Canal, New York  
 Photography by Joerg Lohse

David Ireland House: upstairs back parlor with detail for propane chandelier  
 Courtesy of 500 Capp Street Foundation, San Francisco  
 Photography by Henrik Kam

**Rochelle Goldberg**

Hands Replace the Deck (2016)  
 Courtesy of the Artist and SculptureCenter, New York  
 Photography by Kyle Knodell



## Rochelle Goldberg

SculptureCenter / New York

The centerpiece of Rochelle Goldberg's exhibition "The Plastic Thirsty" is a human-size pair of desiccated fish skeletons titled *For every living carcass I and II* (all works 2016). Slick with imitation-snakeskin glaze, the heads and tails consist of serpentine ceramic coils; slender steel bars animate the skeletons like antiquated machines. The deserted husk of one animal comprises the discarded corpse of another.

Goldberg negotiates Sculpture Center's difficult basement galleries through a series of dream-like vignettes that imbue the show with a sense of abandonment and fearsome potential. However, other works strain to achieve the same effect. *Try Again, I, II, III, IV, V* is a series of magic 8-balls. Their fortunes tell of existential isolation, but the objects' kitsch appeal renders them humdrum and impersonal. In *Iron Oracle*, a contour-line sculpture of a steam engine is lodged within a tunnel-like gallery, which is coated to hip-height with chia seeds. The high-water mark is an eerie, immanent and bodily register of geologic catastrophe, but it's hard not to wonder whether trains, floods, magic 8-balls and snakeskins continue to be legible for their folkloric foreboding. Here, Goldberg's adept craft and material vocabulary struggle to wrest an acute or specific transformation from the histories of the symbols themselves — they remain too general to get under the skin.

Nonetheless, something still hides in the dungeon-like basement. A fiber-optic cable's cold white light glows through a crawlspace in the concrete bulwark. The space is barely large enough to fit an adult; and as the light-line recedes into shadow, intermittently obstructed by indecipherable objects, it appears leftover from some prior industrial function. It's creepy to think that *Original Spill* has been overlooked on prior visits to the institution — it exists within a liminal zone, more infestation than installation. Goldberg's show belongs to this post-apocalyptic dream, but oftentimes it leaves for want the unwieldy and inscrutable experience of such dystopic imaginings.

by Sam Korman

## Stewart Uoo

47 Canal / New York

Stewart Uoo is known for his glammed-up mannequins that hint at a scary future in which we have become so integrated with the things that shape us — fashion, technology and politics — that we no longer appear human. In "Curtains," the artist's second solo show at 47 Canal, Uoo uses a lighter tactic to hone in on the contemporary impressionability of self, turning men's clothes into three large wall sculptures. The sculptures are fun updates of earlier curtain works and, combined with three wall cut outs, set the stage for a critique of the uncertainty and pressure of being on display.

Each of the wall-mounted works consists of large, organic-looking soft sculptures made from a complex amalgam of all sorts of cloth and craft materials hanging from a tricked-out curtain rod. The rods themselves are made from plasma-cut steel, capped with decorative finials and elaborately trimmed in a variety of fabrics. *Curtain Moment III (Eternity)* (2016), for example, is made from Polo shirts, dyed ostrich feathers, nylon and leather stretched over two entwined circles. The dangling part of this work might suggest wedding bands, but to me they look more like two linked gender symbols that have had their cross and arrow removed, creating a gender continuum.

Among the sculptures are several photographs of performer Contessa Stuto, shot in the gallery as a "rogue gallerina" — as the press release notes — performing atypical acts, like lounging on a desk. Also included are four textile-based works by Franklin Williams, Uoo's former art professor, that look like symmetrical abstractions of a morphing biological life form. Uoo has additionally cut three crude window-shaped holes into the walls, exposing the office and storage area. Being able to see through the walls opens up new avenues of exposure to the exhibition as a whole, creating an environment of exciting transparency where, to borrow a phrase of Hannah Arendt's, "being and appearing coincide."

by Aaron Bogart

## David Ireland

SFAI / 500 Capp Street Foundation, San Francisco

The notion of the live-work space irrevocably changed in 1975, when Bay Area Conceptual Art pioneer David Ireland turned an 1866 house in the Mission District into his Gesamtkunstwerk. Until his forties, when he attended the San Francisco Art Institute, Ireland looked outward, with stints as a military man, insurance agent, carpenter, East Africa safari guide and importer of African goods. With 500 Capp Street and its basement "gold mine," he began to look inward, using the detritus of former occupants as source material. Domestic architectural alterations, along with furniture and lighting fixtures became his modes of painting, drawing and sculpting.

The early years of 500 Capp Street are restaged through archival photographs, amplifying the dynamic shift between the site's amber polyurethaned surfaces, which preserved cracks and stains, and the white walls of the institution. At SFAI, an avalanche of concrete connects two floors via staircase, suggesting upward and downward motions that coalesce in a singular moment of molten flow and eruptive becoming (*Smithsonian Falls, Descending a Staircase for P.K.*, 1987).

The denial of access is echoed at 500 Capp Street. *Untitled (View from This Window)* (1981) is a broken window replaced by copper printmaking plates. In front of it sits a round table holding two tape recorders, a functional one on top of a malfunctioning one. In a speed mode that wittily conjures the "fine print" of pharmaceutical side effects, Ireland rattles off a description of the view from the window. As if halting the inevitable progress of the neighborhood, he compresses the present moment into a koan, a palliation, a dirge and a memory chamber. Finally, over the bedroom sink hangs an undated concrete painting. On it lays a torpedo-shaped wooden object that for years Ireland had wanted to paint black. With this discreet work, Ireland, living and sleeping with his art, kept the promise of future, finality and the breakneck speed of change intimately at bay.

by Jo-ey Tang