

REVIEWS

apotheosis in Kaczynski (the Hermit). Counterculture comes full circle: The technological utopia imagined by technogaianism (Knave of Pentacles) contains the seeds of social control; the enforcement of utopian ideals becomes fascist. This is a lot to absorb. The cards demand close viewing and reading—the obsessiveness of Treister's rendering invites us to take the project quite seriously—but they also repel. Viewing them can feel overwhelming, like being cornered by a visionary at a party. The reasonable connections between ideas start to feel outlandish, and the more outlandish ones, beyond the pale. One wonders what these cards want from us: to persuade or fascinate?

Digesting this constellation of ideas is further complicated by Treister's choice of tarot as a delivery device, which throws the whole thing into doubt. (Think, by contrast, of Mark Lombardi's clear, rational, flowcharts documenting corruption.) It posits that the relationships one might perceive among this cast of characters are, if anything, a matter of chance, a shuffling of the deck; her dark counterhistory is no more than a divination. As such, "HEXEN 2.0"—the work and our attempts to engage with it—reminds us just how much of our world remains beyond our grasp.

—Emily Hall

"Fore"

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

Intermittently over the past twelve years, the Studio Museum in Harlem has given over its galleries to large group exhibitions that survey the practices of young black artists in the United States. The first, "Freestyle" (2001), is remembered today for its coinage of the then-provocative term *post-black*, a descriptor proposed by the show's curator, Thelma Golden, to encompass the heterogeneous sensibilities of African American artists of the post-civil-rights generation. That show was followed in 2005–2006 by "Frequency," and then by "Flow," in 2008. The latest installment, "Fore," organized by Lauren Haynes, Naima J. Keith, and Thomas J. Lax, very much extended the thrust of Golden's original presentation, offering a kaleidoscopic, resolutely nonthematic portrait of diverse practices, here represented by the work of twenty-nine artists.

Despite the exhibition's wide sweep with respect to both media and approach, there were distinctive threads that came into view. Most obviously, the show gave considerable attention to performance. Twice during the run, the museum hosted mini-performance festivals featuring work by artists Kevin Beasley, Kenyatta A. C. Hinkle, Narcissister,

and Taisha Paggett, among others. (In one particularly bizarre entry, Jamal Cyrus, wearing white, deep-fried a tenor saxophone.) Additionally, the exhibition displayed a number of video pieces with performative actions at their core. These included Zachary Fabri's languid *Forget me not, as my tether is clipped*, 2012, in which the artist sits on a chair placed on Harlem sidewalks with balloons tied to his dreadlocks and proceeds to cut his own hair, and Nicole Miller's *Dagging*, 2012, displayed nearby, which juxtaposes a projected video of the artist rehearsing ballet with one showing hypersexual dancing at a Brooklyn club.

A through line to these performance works is the body in public space. But "public space" is not a homogeneous thing, and in Steffani Jemison's two videos, she appears acutely aware of the ways in which the politics of a place come to be inflected differently over time. *The Escaped Lunatic*, 2010–11, and *Maniac Chase*, 2008–2009, feature shots of identically dressed men (and, in the latter, women) of color running one after the other through city streets and public parks. This scene is based on early silent films, but the video camera's mostly static gaze paired with the nondescript urban backdrops also situates it in the familiar visual language of contemporary surveillance: from CCTV cameras to Google Street View.

The nexus of technology, space, and the body was differently addressed in Jacoby Satterwhite's *Reifying Desire: Model It*, 2012. There, two projections show the artist dancing in front of luxury clothing stores in New York and in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco wearing a sparkly silver jumpsuit. In the latter projection, jittery digital globules appear in the corner of the screen, and every so often the shots cut to the image of a translucent head filled with flickering advertising images and upbeat family photos. From this delirium of high-end fashion and malleable digital bodies emerge new possibilities for desire and identity, the expanded range of our post-human selves.

The exhibition also prominently featured paintings, mostly abstractions, by Harold Mendez, Sienna Shields, Kianja Strobert, and others. Among these, Brenna Youngblood's stately panels stood out for their elegant use of found objects, including a chopped-up exit sign and paper reconfigured to form the word *BUFFALO*. As Lax writes in his catalogue essay, the use of scavenged materials is, like performance, a way to bridge the divide between art and life, to bring the outside inside and introduce the social. The tendency toward assemblage reached its pinnacle in Abigail DeVille's apocalyptic structure *Harlem Tower of Babel*, 2012, displayed in the museum's courtyard and constructed from found lumber, personal heirlooms, and items, such as a shopping cart, a mannequin, a Christmas-tree stand, and a bedpan, gathered from the surrounding streets. It offers a bleak picture of an environment—decaying, dirty, and nostalgic—but also a strangely optimistic one, an image of fragmentation akin to the multiplication of languages the piece's name implies.

—Lloyd Wise



Steffani Jemison, *Maniac Chase*, 2008–2009, digital video, color, sound, continuous loop. From "Fore," 2012–13.

GREENWICH, CT

Nate Lowman

THE BRANT FOUNDATION ART STUDY CENTER

The more you know about something, the harder it is to say something about it: One is encumbered by the weight of meaning, the artifice of language, the tiredness of metaphors used too often, but perhaps more than anything, simple fear. "One thinks a lot when one is afraid," writes Denis Hollier. "And even more when one is afraid of being afraid. And even more when one is afraid of what one thinks." What could be more luxurious than to give up, to turn away from this space where the familiar presses its face to the glass of reflection? What can be seen there? Perhaps the smeared surface of the mirror is the truest