TINA GIROUARD

Tina Girouard is known as a collaborator in artist communities in New York, New York, Lafayette, Louisiana and Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Girouard's work tells an expansive story of American art. A vanguard artist in the fields of performance, film, textile, printmaking and community-based practices, Girouard's animated work explores the different places she called home.

Born in DeQuincy, Louisiana in 1946, Girouard received a B.F.A. in Fine Art from the University of Southwest Louisiana in 1968 and moved to New York City in 1969 with the Louisiana-born saxophonist, composer and collaborator Richard "Dickie" Landry. Upon moving to New York, Girouard and Landry moved into an apartment at 10 Chatham Square in Chinatown with the painter Mary Heilmann. The trio's home soon became a center of avant-garde art, music and performance in New York as well as a meeting ground for other Louisiana-born artists working in the Post-Minimalist scene, such as Lynda Benglis and Keith Sonnier.

While living in New York, Girouard shaped many significant postwar avant-garde groups and art movements including: The Anarchitecture group; The interdisciplinary experiments in the lofts at 112 Greene Street; The artist-run restaurant FOOD in SoHo; and the Pattern & Decoration movement. After a devastating studio fire in 1978, Girouard and Landry moved back to Louisiana and created a studio near Lafayette. From this new home, Girouard began connecting and collaborating with local artists in the region as a way of supporting Louisiana francophone culture. This eventually led to the founding of the Artists' Alliance in Lafayette in 1986 and the establishment of the Festival International de Louisiane–an international festival that brought together music, dance, theater, visual and culinary arts from francophone Europe, Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean. It was during these projects that Girouard became interested and invested in Haitian art. In 1990, Girouard moved to Port-au-Prince, Haiti and established a studio there, which she kept until 1995. During that time, Girouard studied alongside Haitian artists and learned to make traditional vodou flags, collaborating extensively with Antoine Oleyant and Georges Valris.

Girouard has an exhibition history that includes a 1983 mid-career retrospective mounted at the Rufino Tamayo Museum in Mexico City, and international events such as the 1980 Venice Biennale, the 1977 Paris Biennale, 1977 Documenta VI and 1972 Documenta V, Kassel. Girouard's work has been exhibited widely at galleries and museums including: Leo Castelli Gallery, The Kitchen, Walker Art Center, New Orleans Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels, Holly Solomon Gallery, David Zwirner, the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, and the New Museum. Her work was recently on view in the exhibition With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972 – 1985 curated by Anna Katz, originating at MOCA Los Angeles, which travelled to the Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, NY. Girouard's work is in the permanent collections of the Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA; Ludwig Forum fur International Kunst Aachen, DE; Rufino Tamayo Museum, Mexico City, Mexico; and Stedelijk Museum Actuele Kunst, Gent, Belgium.

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REVIEWS NEW ORLEANS

Tina Girouard

Ogden Museum of Southern Art

By Lauren Stroh

Tina Girouard in collaboration with the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, *Conflicting Evidence*, 1980, sewn fabric panels with pigment, overall 12 × 9'.

Anarchitecture, a term Gordon Matta-Clark coined for a movement that experimented with disassembling traditional architectural designs and concepts—and that was subsequently adopted as the name of a group of like-minded artists—describes a coterie that, in some ways, was a real boys' club. Constituted of Herculean feats that defied physics and practicality, the collective's output was often destructive: Think blown-out windows, collapsed buildings, and homes made uninhabitable. Take *Splitting*, 1974,

for which Matta-Clark cut a house in half and set it back on its foundation to exaggerate the white space between, emphasizing the physical limits of materials under stress and a desire to divorce himself from the mundane trappings of the American Dream.

Perhaps this is what sets the Louisiana-born Tina Girouard (1946–2020) apart from her contemporaries in the Anarchitecture group. Where others focused on material anarchy and disrupting the normative politics of urban spaces and private property, Girouard undertook the "women's work" that underwrites this territory, illuminating everyday domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, grooming, decorating, and homemaking as gendered performances via art.

In "Tina Girouard: SIGN-IN," her first major retrospective at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans—organized by the Rivers Institute for Contemporary Art & Thought—Girouard serves as both muse and maker. Her career trajectory resembles the plotline of "Cinderella": In a suite of photographs documenting her 1971 installation/performance *Swept House*—part of curator Alanna Heiss's "Brooklyn Bridge Event," a temporary exhibition that appeared beneath the titular structure—we see the artist sweeping dirt from under the steel supports of the overpass alongside a crew of local children. Elsewhere in this show, we watch her debone a chicken at the de facto soup kitchen for SoHo artists, Food, which fed thousands for next to nothing (or for free) between 1971 and 1974. In archival footage, Girouard hand-washes silks bequeathed to her as a dowry by her mother-in-law for *Maintenance III: Sewing, Washing, Wringing, Rinsing, Folding Solomon's Lot*, 1973. In 1978, however, after a decade of living and working in New York, the artist returned to Louisiana to convert a former convenience store into a shared house and studio with her husband (and fellow anarchitect) Richard Landry. A scrapbook of photographs in this presentation chronicles the building's transportation to the couple's property in Cecilia, a poetic gesture that underscores anarchitecture's potential for rehabilitation as well as decline.

Also on display in “SIGN-IN” are Girouard’s works on paper, archives, and personal letters; of particular interest are her serial codices of pictographs made by different cultures, accompanied by her own renditions of them. These symbols make up the prototype for a universal language composed of simplified line drawings, which anticipate the artist’s interest in world heritage and cross-cultural exchange.

Most easy to love are the artist’s experiments with decorative arts from the 1970s, in which she repurposed linoleum, wallpaper, textiles, and other types of home decor for unabashedly gaudy and girly collages. These materials were not costly or recherché; they are easily sourced goods that were plentiful and cheap. One also gets the sense that these works were made without much irony, unlike her peers’ gendered critiques (e.g., that of Lynda Benglis, also from southwest Louisiana, who ironically detourned the tropes of pornography with her own body in a purchased advertisement that appeared in this magazine in 1974, creating an art-world schism). Considering the period during which these collages were made, concurrent with the emergence of radical feminism, Girouard has been largely excluded from the canonical art discourse. Her work prioritizes a familiarity with suburban and rural cultural norms over those found in more urban settings. The art focuses on communal harmony and shared social practices, illustrating the pleasures and aesthetic beauty inherent to hosting or homemaking, e.g., creating kinships through ritual.

Domestic labor makes up the lives of most Cajun women in Louisiana, where Girouard was born, lived, and died. These works cleverly draw attention to the financial realities that underwrite both artmaking and women’s labor, invoking one of anarchitecture’s chief aims: to cut away from material excess, greed, and overconsumption by repurposing ready-made patterns and designs. Girouard does so in order to make home a place we’d want to return to, the site of a happily ever after.

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Tina Girouard's "SIGN-IN"

Cat Kron

Tina Girouard, *Pinwheel*, 1977. Photo documentation of installation and performance. Filmed and performed for the exhibition "Five From Louisiana" at the New Orleans Museum of Art, 1977. Image courtesy of the Estate of Tina Girouard and Artists Rights Society (ARS) New York.

Performance art offers its viewer what other visual forms can't: a direct address in real time. Yet in the years that follow its realization, the medium is susceptible to misremembering, or worse, indifference; its curators frequently resort to displaying a work's discards in an effort to recreate the experience of its unfolding after the original audience has, quite literally, moved on.

When it comes to Louisianian artist Tina Girouard, much of the imagined audience was never there in the first place. Girouard's difficult-to-classify performance work—she remains best known within the art world for her collaboration with Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark on the restaurant-cum-happening FOOD—transpired primarily in downtown New York in the 1970s, and until recently almost none of it trickled down to the Bayou, an unfortunate fact given how prominently the region figured in her own artistic mythology. The artist's method of repurposing the same materials in performance after performance inadvertently complicated the task of future curators and archivists who might hope to recreate specific iterations.

View of Tina Girouard's "SIGN-IN" at Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, 2024. Photo by Alex Marks.

Foremost among her props were eight twelve-foot lengths of floral-printed silk, on which she bestowed the typically mythical-sounding name "Solomon's Lot," and which she used in many of her performances throughout the 1970s. These function as both physical supports in the works' choreography and a symbolic throughline for them. All eight of the textiles were unboxed for this posthumous retrospective, the artist's first. They are strung from rods which hang from the ceiling with four sheets to a wire; one set hangs perpendicular to the floor, the other hovers at an acute angle to it. The resulting pair of pastel banners presides over the fifth-floor gallery.

Curated by the Rivers Institute's Andrea Andersson at the Ogden Museum, "Tina Girouard: SIGN-IN" traces a narrative from the artist's early improvisational performances to her later, meticulously embellished textiles, which the "Solomon's Lot" materials serve to bridge. Part of her wedding dowry, the set of silks was named for an uncle of Girouard's partner Richard "Dickie" Landry, with whom she moved to Mary Heilmann's Chinatown loft in 1969, shortly after graduating from the University of Southwest Louisiana. Both artists had Cajun heritage, and each summer Girouard continued to visit her family home in Acadiana, the state's southernmost region, where she sourced the materials that would become the lynchpin of her performances.[1]

Girouard first used the Lot textiles in the movement *Air Space Stage* from the quartet *Four Stages* (1972), a suite of architectural installations made using rudimentary building materials to be activated by performers. She sited the installations and performances at 112 Greene Street, the gallery/incubator run by Matta-Clark. For *Air Space Stage*, Girouard attached four of the Lot silks to the lofted ceiling, where they functioned as an upper frame for the activity—improvised balancing and swinging on hanging slats and two-by-fours—performed by the participants. The fabrics would resurface in works throughout the seventies at then-nascent New York performance venues including the Kitchen and the Clocktower. They traveled with Girouard to Kassel for Documenta 6, where the artist performed *Camoplage* (1977), in which two players washed a length of one of the fabrics in the Fulda River—a gesture that echoed the artist's taped performance of herself washing, rinsing, and wringing the cloths in *Part III* (1973) of her video suite *Maintenance* (1970–76).

View of Tina Girouard's "SIGN-IN" at Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, 2024. Photo by Alex Marks.

Girouard's conscientious handling of these fabrics, informed by her work at the vanguard of the Pattern and Decoration Movement, was at once infused with the ritual motions of domestic labor and with a treatment of the "Lots" as bodies to be cared for. As well as the "Lots," human players circulated in and out from piece to piece, in keeping with Girouard's notion of hospitality.[2] The "Solomon's Lot" textiles were given a "grand finale" in *Pinwheel,* performed at the New Orleans Museum of Art in 1977, before being officially retired. For *Pinwheel,* Girouard and three other performers placed the silk strips in a cruciform, which they then proceeded to embellish over the course of the hourlong performance as an overhead camera looked on and recorded. Here at the Ogden, this footage is projected onto the floor of the smaller gallery, with chairs upholstered with patterned textiles creating an intimate gathering space around the projection.

That Girouard's performance work is finally being recognized in Louisiana is fitting. It's also corrective. She returned to her home state permanently in 1978 following a studio fire in New York; in the years following *Pinwheel,* she moved toward works made *of* cloth, rather than performed with it. In the latter half of her life she was better known locally for textiles and graphic prints, the sort of seemingly anodyne art familiar to locals as décor from family doctors' offices. Yet rather than proof of a downward trajectory from youthful experimentation to conservative middle and later works, these pieces were a logical continuation of Girouard's investment in the Pattern and Decoration Movement she had helped galvanize, convinced that the borders between decorative and fine art are permeable. The Rivers Institute has done the painstaking work of reconstructing the timeline of Girouard's performances, and has satisfyingly re-sited them in the context where they gestated. But one could sense the "Lots" straining against their tethers, waiting to be reanimated on their native soil.

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ARTFORUM

PATTERN RECOGNITION

Lynne Cooke on the Pattern and Decoration movement

By Lynne Cooke

IN AN APPRECIATIVE 2016 REVIEW of new work by Valerie Jaudon, critic David Frankel noted that the Pattern and Decoration movement, of which Jaudon was a prominent member, had long been held in disrepute. "In the early '80s," Frankel wrote, "I remember a colleague at *Artforum* at the time saying it could never be taken seriously in the magazine."[1] In retrospect, what makes this dismissal so striking is that, in the mid-'70s, *Artforum* contributed significantly to P&D's emergence into the spotlight, publishing key texts by its advocates along with numerous reviews of its shows. Amy Goldin's "Patterns, Grids, and Painting" (1975) and Jeff Perrone's "Approaching the Decorative" (1976) were among the early touchstones for P&D's heterogeneous cohort, riled by the unmitigated critical support for diverse ascetic and masculinist tendencies pervasive in the painting of the moment. However, by the mid-'80s, eclipsed by newer developments—the Pictures generation, neo-geo, et al.—P&D was increasingly coming under fire for positions now considered controversial: for the purported essentialism of its versions of second-wave feminism, for a naive advocacy that masked acts of Orientalizing and primitivizing, for cultural imperialism. More fundamental "problems" largely went unnoted, including a lack of the kind of conceptual depth expected of cutting-edge practices: In their commitment to the decorative, P&D artists prioritized surface over subject matter, the former serving primarily as a vehicle for sensuous effects. Not least, the art world's entrenched sexism fostered the occasion for its denizens to belittle and sideline a movement renowned for the dominant role played by women in its genesis and trajectory.

Until recently, the disparaging assessment offered by Frankel's colleague largely prevailed. Consider the Fondation Beyeler's ambitious exhibition "Ornament and Abstraction: The Dialogue between Non-Western, Modern and Contemporary Art," which opened in June 2001 to coincide with that year's edition of the prestigious Art Basel fair. The sprawling survey ranged from Gauguin to Mondrian to then-new art stars such as Peter Kogler. Surprisingly, given its subject, the show included no works by artists associated with the P&D movement.[2]

The sea change began in 2018 with the opening of the first of four major P&D-centered shows that would tour in Europe and the United States over the next three years. Each exhibition shone a different light on the last of the strategically organized art movements of the twentieth century, yet common to all was a significant representation of women. The first of the quartet, "Pattern and Decoration: Ornament as Promise," debuted at the Ludwig Forum in Aachen, Germany, and was drawn from the holdings of the Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation, whose namesakes avidly collected this work on visits to New York in the late '70s. In the version of the show installed at Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna, curator Manuela Ammer homed in on thirteen artists, most of whom were cornerstones of P&D's extensive, loose, and shifting cohort, their works running the gamut from painting, sculpture, ceramic tiles, and multimedia installation to performance and video. "Pattern, Decoration & Crime," which originated at the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva, featured twenty-eight artists, including several Continentals—Marc Camille Chaimowicz, Simon Hantaï, and Claude Viallat—whom the organizers felt shared "formal concerns" with their American peers. In their titles, both exhibitions reference Adolf Loos's seminal and infamously misogynist and colonialist polemic "Ornament and Crime," published in Vienna in 1908. While Loos and Ammer agree that ornament is superficial—or, to use the former's term, "degenerate"—Ammer assigns a positive value to the queer and feminist identities that found such propitious conditions in ornament's decorative excess and gendered coding.

Curiously missing from the two American shows was a willingness to think outside heteronormative categories and binary gender relations. Focus on feminist positions came at the expense of ways in which certain of these works may be read as queered. Similarly, the workings of the masculinist privilege that ascribes riskiness to male artists' engagement with decoration while demeaning that of their female counterparts go unexplored.

Each of these exhibitions shone a different light on the last of the strategically organized art movements of the twentieth century, yet common to all was the representation of women artists.

Rambunctious and opulent, "Less Is a Bore: Maximalist Art and Design," at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, embraced not only '70s designers and artists—notably, Lucinda Childs, Nathalie du Pasquier, Sol LeWitt, Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi, and Ettore Sottsass, all contemporaries of the original P&D coterie—but expanded their roster to include subsequent generations. Fleshing out curator Jenelle Porter's capacious vision of "maximalism" were works by a miscellany of those whom she viewed as its current exponents, Polly Apfelbaum, Tord Boontje, Leigh Bowery and Fergus Greer, and Haegue Yang among them. In total, some forty-four divergent players assumed walk-on parts in a dense, upbeat, high-voltage installation.

By contrast, "With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985"—which originated in 2019 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, before traveling to the Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York—focused on the movement's prime years while extending the time frame back to 1972. Thus the organizers emphasized California progenitors such as *Womanhouse*, staged at CalArts, where Miriam Schapiro was then teaching along with Judy Chicago. That fall, Goldin, who would become the movement's most committed supporter and apologist, began a New York–Harvard commute to attend classes on Islamic art by revered scholar Oleg Grabar. In naming the show, curator Anna Katz put into play an unresolvable ambiguity that ultimately cleaved her project. The exhibition's title opens to two distinct readings. In one, the subject is the P&D movement within the larger context of American art between 1972 and 1985; in the other, the subject is broadly thematic: decoration and pattern in American art during the given time frame. At the Hessel Museum, where works by artists originally associated with P&D are indistinguishably mixed in with those of nonaligned contemporaries and precursors under a series of generic subheadings, the second reading prevails. The accompanying publication, by contrast, clearly performs the first. Katz's introductory essay, together with the newly commissioned scholarly texts and ancillary materials, concentrates on the movement.

View of "Pattern and Decoration: Ornament as Promise," 2019, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna. Foreground: Tina Girouard, *Air Space Stage I, II*, 1972/2019. Photo: Stephan Wyckoff.

That said, Katz's recuperative agenda—the rehabilitation of an unjustly neglected artistic phenomenon—is at the same time threaded through by a corrective impulse. Reflecting today's urgent issues, she enlarges the fluctuating network of original participants to include artists who "would've, could've, or should've" been part of it—had they not, like ceramist Betty Woodman, lived largely away from the coastal centers and self-identified as craftspeople. A similar fate awaited those who, like William T. Williams, created abstract paintings that, while indebted to Islamic visual traditions (a determining preoccupation of many P&D artists), nonetheless fell outside the purview of its exclusively white protagonists. Katz's broad brush raises the possibility of additional blind spots. Why not, for example, amplify the sartorial forays of Schapiro and Robert Kushner by adding Katherine Westphal's gorgeous hand-printed paper kimonos? These were standouts among the experimental works made by textile artists in both California and New York exploring forms of wearable art in the '70s and '80s. Though preoccupied with vernacular and historic craft traditions, P&D evinced scant interest in the ascendant postwar studio-craft movement then attracting widespread public attention. Critic Barbara Rose speculated that snobbery was the basis for the disregard fine artists showed their professionally trained counterparts in the applied arts.[3] But in the case of P&D artists, anxiety about their works' status and by extension their own professional standing may have contributed to a reluctance to be aligned with their natural allies, contemporary practitioners delegitimized as "minor."

Kim MacConnel, an early P&D member, recently characterized the diverse affiliate as "like minds with an astonishing array of differing interests." By expanding those already loose networks to accommodate current ideological concerns, "With Pleasure" risks distorting the heady mixture of reactive, contingent, and necessarily partisan perspectives motivating the movement's formation, even as each member pursued her own artistic agenda. Arguably, what's needed at this moment is something more than redemptive and remedial curatorial approaches that situate P&D artists within larger frameworks, whether of progenitors, of contemporaries, or of legatees who broadly shared the movement's diverse aesthetic preoccupations. Fundamental to its recuperation is a historically framed granular parsing of its central aesthetic preoccupations—above all, the slippery and highly subjective concept of the decorative.

IN LATE 1974, spurred by what Jaudon described as their frustration with the narrowness of the criticism of the day, a small, intergenerational group of abstract painters began meeting in downtown Manhattan lofts. Inclusive, exuberant, and colorful, their often newly minted aesthetics were patently at odds with the austere reductivist abstraction then dominant. Challenging the narrow, medium-specific issues regnant in painterly discourse, they drew on modes of decoration found in both the great non-Western cultures of the past—above all, Islamic traditions of abstract patterning—and humble vernacular and domestic crafts gendered as women's work. Excited to recognize others with like-minded concerns but apprehensive of the critical opprobrium they anticipated, they discussed with Goldin the advantages of framing themselves as part of a movement. Key to their thinking were lessons learned from the women's movement, with which several were personally involved: the tactical value of group endeavor, collective action, networking, and consciousness-raising. In 1975, what soon became known as Pattern and Decoration jelled in a series of public convenings: artists panels, talks, and a gallery show organized by one of their own, quilter Jane Kaufman, tellingly titled "Ten Approaches to the Decorative." Critical recognition rapidly followed, along with market validation. By decade's end, group shows had appeared in public and private venues across the nation; others were taking place in Europe. Sales rocketed, such that many core members became preoccupied with managing their escalating careers. Seemingly, they no longer had time to get together. By the mid-'80s, the group's momentum had stalled.

In this by-now-codified account, their galvanizing feelings of anxiety are regularly restated. In fact, there was remarkably little substantive or sustained art-world resistance to their recursive vision of painting's expansive domain.[4] By the time the P&D movement was underway, art that engaged with the decorative and with abstract-adjacent forms of pattern was widespread, if largely absent from critical discourse.

In 1970, Frank Stella, the preeminent abstract painter of the moment, had predicted as much in the catalogue to his first retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art. "My main interest," he noted with reference to his most recent works, "has been to make what is popularly called decorative painting truly viable in unequivocal abstract terms." Stella nonetheless immediately qualified his revelation: He meant "decorative . . . in a good sense," he explained, instancing Matisse, whose manifestly ornamental *papiers découpés* were then garnering unprecedented acclaim.[5] If there were "good" versions of decorative, then there must be "bad," but what those were Stella left unmentioned. To the mandarin theorists who championed his art, the work of P&D painters likely embodied the latter, but they typically refrained from making any accusation: Silence can be an effective tool of dismissal. However, for other exponents of '60s purist abstraction, such as Perrone, who rapidly changed course, the writing was on the wall. Their wholesale embrace of P&D suggests that recent variants of hard-edge geometric and systems-based abstraction had been found wanting: etiolated, insular, hollowed out. Were this not the case, how else to account for the movement's critical and commercial success virtually from the outset?

In 1979, legendary curator and art-world influencer Harald Szeemann traveled to New York to check out for himself what in Europe was touted as the latest manifestation of the avant-garde. Though much impressed by its preponderance of women artists, Szeemann immediately recognized that P&D was far from transgressive, or even subversive, in an era that had spawned radical forms of expression in photography, video, film, performance, and Conceptual art. Excepting Tina Girouard, Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt, and Ned Smyth (whom he doesn't mention in the article he wrote on returning home), the movement's protagonists never abandoned painting as their primary reference point. Thus, far from signaling a substantive break with the immediate past, P&D represented a return, Szeemann concluded, to the kind of "relaxed" art of abstracted forms arranged decoratively on a flat surface that Matisse had propounded as long ago as 1908 in his "Notes of a Painter."

Barely two years after writing that seminal text, Matisse visited a groundbreaking exhibition of Islamic art in Munich; the encounter would trigger for him a lifelong fascination with that greatest of decorative cultures. His epiphany was far from unique. Countless others—from Klee and Kandinsky through Stella and P&D initiators Jaudon and Joyce Kozloff—would follow in his wake. In his 1979 text "The Decorative Impulse," Perrone claimed that the P&D cadre was drawn to Islamic art as part of a "constant attempt by artists to drive art out of its antisocial tower and back into the everyday world." That goal would be realized literally by Jaudon and Kozloff, whose aspirations to create public art and architecture led to commissions for civic plazas, the New York subway system, Amtrak stations, and corporate campuses.

By the dawn of the new millennium, the repeated and sustained engagements by Western artists with Islamic art across the previous century made clear that the narratives of modernist art history could no longer be written without consideration of abstraction's ongoing intersections with pattern and decoration. "Far from being a repository of outmoded traditions, [ornament] has played a constitutive role in modern art," Markus Brüderlin concluded in his 2001 introduction to *Ornament and Abstraction*. That said, the interrelated concepts of decoration, ornament, and pattern are anything but universal, monolithic, and fixed. Whether made by a viewer or by the artist, the judgment that an artwork is decorative is qualitative, ideologically freighted, and inevitably shaped by context. And while pattern is typically put in the service of decorative impulses, exceptions may be found even within the precincts of the P&D community, as seen in the art of Tony Robbin. In the large-scale paintings suffused with lyric color that he produced in the '70s, Robbin modeled overlapping multidimensional spaces by melding and layering patterns appropriated from Japanese art and architecture, and elsewhere. In the '80s, he furthered these complex optical explorations by way of computer programming. Decoration was anathema to his endeavor.

When casually employed today, the term *decorative* may still serve as a shorthand slur. Yet it carries little real weight, and not only because the richly nuanced ways in which the decorative consumed artists and critics throughout the modernist era are undeniable. The efflorescence over the past two decades of art practices incorporating textile materials and techniques, predicated on issues of patterning and ornamentation, has largely dispelled any residual negativity. Disappointingly, none of the contributors to the catalogues of these four shows follow their predecessors' examples or, with the benefit of hindsight, systematically tease out the operations of those ubiquitous if elusive concepts in searching detail. Each publication reprints articles from the heyday of P&D by leading advocates Goldin, Perrault, Perrone, Szeemann, et al., together with artists' statements old and new. Since much of this material is readily available online, its foregrounding suggests a shared conviction that authoritative formulations and interpretations continue to reside in the hands of the movement's progenitors.

The interrelated concepts of decoration, ornament, and pattern are anything but universal, monolithic, and fixed.

The catalogues consequently fail to build on the few scholarly contributions that challenge long-held accounts. In an essay on Jaudon published in 1996, Anna Chave demonstrates that continuity and indebtedness are as evident in the artist's nuanced work as rejection. A decade later, in a second important text, Chave explored the significant groundwork laid in the late '60s by a band of "outlaw" women artists with overlapping concerns, among them Lynda Benglis, Louise Fishman, Harmony Hammond, Ree Morton, and Howardina Pindell.[6]

P&D's long eclipse in mainstream art-historical narratives may explain not only the tenacious grip of formative interpretations but also the lack of in-depth, fine-grained studies of principals such as Girouard, who died last year and whose work commands increasing attention. Her distinctive mode of legitimating decorative practices involved the use of found lengths of vintage fabric, which she manipulated into provisional architectural structures for the performance of dance and ritual ceremonies. Somewhat of an outlier in the P&D community, Girouard was immersed in circuits around Gordon Matta-Clark, artists' group Anarchitecture, and New York alternative space 112 Greene Street. A close reading of her singular work and career would productively complicate the critical dicta that position P&D as a self-propelling polyglot ensemble fixated on contesting a hegemonic painting discourse.

Tina Girouard, *Lie No*, 1973. Performance view, 112 Greene Street, New York, September 1973. Tina Girouard. © Tina Girouard/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

The relative dearth of recent scholarship that drills down on P&D's primary artists and issues makes it difficult to weigh its legacy. How, for example, to distinguish its impact on later generations from the broadly based cultural trend that Porter dubs maximalism? How might its prescient navigating of questions of identity illuminate contemporary explorations of subject positions based in race and gender? Neither definitive nor exhaustive, these four reprises of the hitherto better-known-about-than-known movement are nonetheless a welcome sign of change. Finally, the door has been cracked open.

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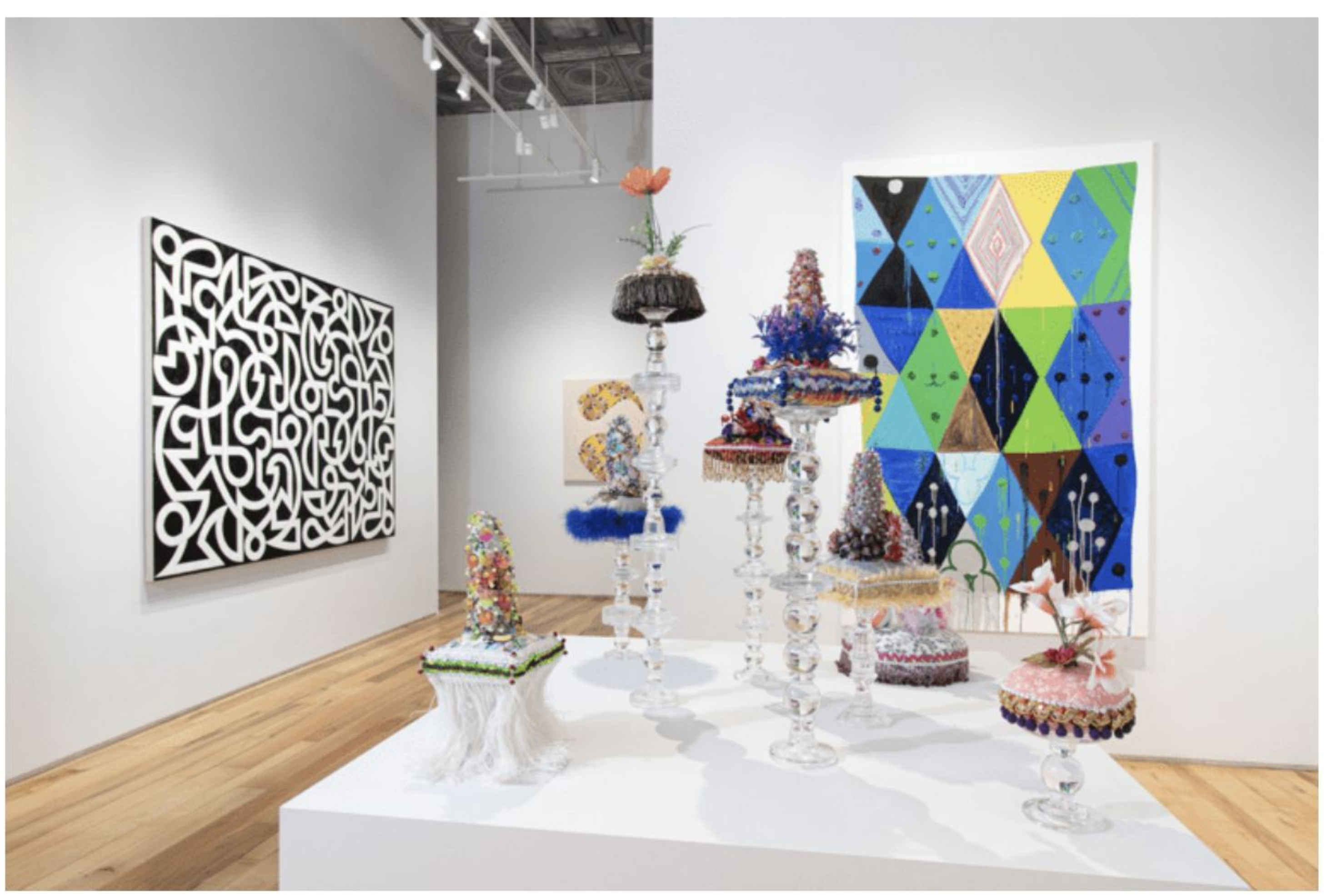
INTERIOR DESIGN

Highlights from 'With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985'



Installation view of "Fringe." Photography courtesy of Denny Dimin Gallery.

Writing wall labels for an exhibition at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles in 2016 led to curator Anna Katz's discovery of an American art movement from 1970s. "After completing a Ph.D. in contemporary art, I was astonished to have never heard of Pattern and Decoration and some of its key artists, such as Kim MacConnel," she tells *Interior Design*. The first thing Katz embarked on upon becoming the museum's in-house curator the following year was an exhibition that would put the influential but somewhat forgotten movement back on the map.

“With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985” opened at MOCA in October, 2019 with a display of around 50 artists whose work between early 1970s and mid-‘80s defied the era’s male-dominated minimalism with interpretation of craft and decorative techniques, “while using abstraction with forceful presence,” according to the curator. The show recently traveled to the Hessel Museum of Art at the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, to emphasize the movement’s exchange between East and West Coasts as well as to continue the conversation around Pattern and Decoration (also known as P&D)’s influence on artists who insistently use craft today.

“When I visit young artists’ studios, I see how craft has become a tool to talk about marginalization and value,” Katz explains. P&D’s unsung motto of “more is more” echoes in contemporary artists, who according to the curator, believe “what’s considered unnecessary is necessary; over the top, just the right amount;” and “irrelevant, relevant.”

She had initially planned a show that would perhaps reflect the P&D movement’s “sharp edge of a wedge,” but her three years of research and visits to many attics and storage facilities led her towards an expansive direction. Besides the movement’s critical figures, such as Cynthia Carlson, Joyce Kozloff, Kim MacConnel, and Miriam Schapiro, artists who have not necessarily been considered a part of P&D also made the cut. “I am not claiming Lynda Benglis or Al Loving were a part of the group, but there is a tremendous crossover between the core artists and others’ overturning of hierarchies of western art tradition which gerrymandered to exclude anyone except white and male.”

Fabrics with bright sequins or gaudy-colored ceramics may now prevail contemporary art galleries, “but that was not the case back then,” Katz reminds, noting that the show offers perspective on why the current norm was so radical at the time while recovering important artistic voices.

This very connection between the past and present prompted the Denny Dimin Gallery in Manhattan to organize the ongoing group exhibition, "Fringe." "Some of our gallery artists, including Amanda Valdez, Justine Hill, and Future Retrieval, are unabashedly influenced by the 1970s movement," says founder and partner Elizabeth Denny. "There are many new conversations to have about the role of the artist in terms of gender and identity that many of the P&D artists were having, which are still so important today." "Fringe" includes 12 contemporary artists who adapt craft techniques, including sewing or floral arrangement, to deliver statements on race, identity, and gender. Artist Justine Hill, who also assisted Denny in organizing the show, sees the show as an opportunity to expand on a major influence on her work, "and bring that interest out of the studio to think about my peers through a P&D lens."

Interior Design has picked highlights from the Hessel Museum of Art at CCs Bard's ongoing exhibition, "With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985," in addition to a few from "Fringe" in Manhattan.

Tina Girouard, *Maintenance III*, 1973

Tina Girouard, *Maintenance III*, 1973, Video (color, sound) 27 min. Courtesy of the artist's estate.

This 27-minute projection zooms onto Girouard's lap while she tends a group of floral fabrics which she inherited from her uncle, Sullivan. Throughout the video, she rinses, sews, and folds the materials while the radio in the background plays content that ranges from the time's popular tunes, advertisement, and political updates. A song from Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of The Moon* album is followed by a car dealership advertisement, and we eventually hear the most recent development in the Watergate hearings. "That big 'a-ha' moment is critical about the movement's queering of not only contemporary art but the broader authority," says Katz. The topics' relevancy to the present, particularly a few years ago during the curator's research for the show, is further striking.

Ocula
July 31 2020

OCULA

Tina Girouard's Elevated Patterns

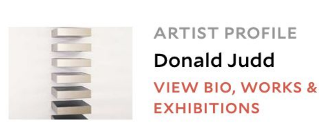
Arriving in New York in 1969 from Louisiana, where she was born in 1946, Tina Girouard helped pave the way for SoHo's experimental scene of the 1970s, becoming a founding participant of, among other institutions, PS1 and Creative Time.

Girouard's multidisciplinary practice was defined by a resourcefulness and collaborative spirit that engaged with the boundaries of art-making in order to subvert them. This spirit, the artist explained in a 1973 interview with *Avalanche* magazine, originated from being in contact with jazz and blues musicians back home.

Tina Girouard, *Air Space Stage* (1972). Exhibition view: Tina Girouard, *A Place That Has No Name: Early Works*, Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles (22 February–13 June 2020). Courtesy Anat Ebgi.

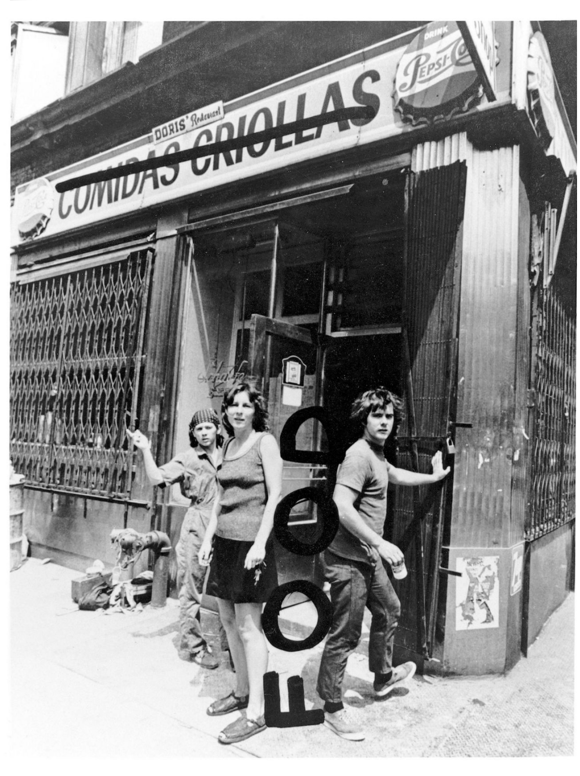
Girouard moved to New York after completing her BFA at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. She shared a Chinatown loft with fellow Louisianan Richard Landry, where the Philip Glass Ensemble would regularly rehearse, becoming a focal point for the downtown artist community.

In 1971, she co-founded the cooperative restaurant Food with Gordon Matta-Clark and Carol Goodden. What originated as a place to exchange ideas soon became a vital nexus for artists and communities in the area, providing employment, a site for performances, and, of course, nourishment, with meals offered by the likes of Donald Judd and Robert Rauschenberg, whose assistant, Hisachika Takahashi, served raw mackerel and wasabi sauce.



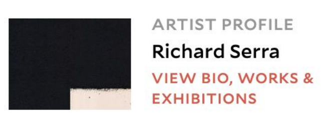
ARTIST PROFILE
Donald Judd
VIEW BIO, WORKS & EXHIBITIONS

From Food, Anarchitecture was born—a movement helmed by Girouard, Matta-Clark, and Goodden, alongside Laurie Anderson, Suzanne Harris, Jene Highstein, Bernard Kirschenbaum, and Richard Landry. Less focused on architecture than it was on social space, artists worked with peripheral and disused sites to draw attention to the 'voids and failures that paradoxically glue together the built environment'; an approach exemplified by Matta-Clark's building cuts.[1]



Tina Girouard, left, with Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark in front of Food, their artist-run restaurant at the corner of Prince and Wooster Streets in SoHo in 1971. Credit: Richard Landry, alteration by Gordon Matta-Clark, via David Zwirner, New York.

Girouard's early performances similarly activated peripheral space in works such as *Swept House* (1969). Staged beneath the Brooklyn Bridge in an event curated by Clocktower Gallery founder Alanna Heiss, Girouard swept the architectural outlines of a house into the floor, incorporating garbage from the site into its plan, such as a discarded stove to symbolise a kitchen.



ARTIST PROFILE
Richard Serra
VIEW BIO, WORKS & EXHIBITIONS

Located one block away from Food was 112 Greene Street Gallery (now White Columns), which artist Jeffrey Lew and dancer Rachel Wood opened in an old rag salvaging factory in 1970, offering another site of experimentation for artists such as Spalding Gray, Alice Aycock, Laurie Anderson, Chris Burden, and Richard Serra. Experiments varied: Charles Simmons covered all 4,000-square-feet of the basement floor with clay; Matta-Clark jack-hammered the entire concrete floor to expose a room-sized section of earth; on another occasion, Vito Acconci was enclosed in the space with a rooster, with Girouard assigned to capture the animal.

Tina Girouard, *Air Space Stage* (1972). Exhibition view: Tina Girouard, A Place That Has No Name: Early Works, Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles (22 February–13 June 2020). Courtesy Anat Ebgi.

Girouard exhibited some of her earliest work at 112 Greene Street: performances and installations that articulated the architecture of the space, including *Air Space Stage* (1972)—four sheets of patterned fabric suspended from the ceiling to create a space within a space, their shades changing the light of the room depending on the time of day.

22 FEB–13 JUN 2020
Tina Girouard
A Place That Has No Name: Early Works
Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles
VIEW EXHIBITION

Air Space Stage was recently included among Girouard's early works in the late artist's solo exhibition *A Place That Has No Name: Early Works*, at Anat Ebgi in Los Angeles (22 February–13 June 2020). The piece is indicative of Girouard's use of patterned and ordinary materials, such as fabrics, wall paper, or linoleum, which she combined into basic rectangular or grid structures while asserting their eclectic surfaces—an accessibility of form that pointed to the artist's 'desire to communicate to a mass audience' using the language of repetition, which 'is common in industry and thus in life.' [2]

Performance view: Tina Girouard, *Live House*, 112 Greene Street, New York (May 1971). Courtesy White Columns.

Repetitive patterns also informed Girouard's performances, such as the strokes of the broom in the aforementioned *Swept House*, and in the later *Pinwheel* (1977), originally staged at the New Orleans Museum of Art as part of the 1977 exhibition *Five From Louisiana*, which included work by Lynda Benglis, Richard Landry, Robert Rauschenberg, and Keith Sonnier. Four performers, each representing personae charcterised as animal, vegetable, mineral, and other, enacted a ritualistic language devised by Girouard using objects and patterned silks. The performance was restaged in 2019 at Art Basel in Miami Beach by Anat Ebgi in collaboration with The Kitchen.

CONVERSATIONS
Lynda Benglis
READ MORE

While associated with Post-Minimalism, Girouard's use of textiles also situated her in the Pattern and Decoration movement, founded by Valerie Jaudon and Joyce Kozloff, which made use of loaded, decorative surfaces to react against the restraint of male-dominated modernism.

PHOTOLOGS
Meridians at Art Basel Miami Beach
VIEW MORE

Art critic Holland Cotter described Pattern and Decoration as 'the last genuine movement of the 20th century' in 2008.[3] He was responding to the exhibition *Pattern and Decoration: An Ideal Vision in American Art, 1975–1985* at the Hudson River Museum—a legacy that is currently being revisited at the Hessel Museum of Art in the exhibition *With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985* (26 June 2020–28 November 2021), of which Girouard is part.

Curated by Anna Katz and Rebecca Lowery, *With Pleasure* represents the first full-scale scholarly survey of the Pattern and Decoration movement. The show travelled to Hessel Museum of Art from The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, where it was staged between 27 October 2019 and 18 May 2020.

Girouard's work in the exhibition, *Wall's Wallpaper III* (1974), is composed of four rectilinear strips of Biedermeier wallpaper with differing patterns—a revision of the repeated, rectangular planes of minimalism that refuses the habitual function of wallpaper while maintaining its charmed floral surface. The effort connects Girouard's work to those of the approximately 50 exhibiting artists in *With Pleasure*, including Joyce Kozloff, Kim MacConnel, and Miriam Schapiro, whose practices leaned unapologetically into kitsch and gaudy designs in order to undermine perceptions of art forms coded as feminine, domestic, or ornamental.

Tina Girouard, *Orion and Koko* (c. 1990s). Sequins and beads on fabric. 52,07 x 52.07 cm. Courtesy Anat Ebgi.

Girouard's practice was equally pluralistic, and upon returning to Louisiana after a fire devastated her studio in 1978, her practice extended outwards. In 1980, she participated in the Venice Biennale, having shown in the Paris Biennale, Documenta VI, and Documenta V the decade before. Through the '80s, she helped found Artists' Alliance in Lafayette, and later spent time as director and president of the Festival International de Louisiane, where she became acquainted with the arts of Haiti. This encounter led to Port-au-Prince, where she kept a studio from 1990 to 1995.

Finding kinship with her birthplace of Louisiana, Girouard said that she lost her head and her heart in Haiti. She collaborated with Haitian artists such as Edgar Jean-Louis to create sequined and beaded voodoo flags, a selection of which were shown in an exhibition at New Orleans Museum of Art in 2019, co-curated by Nicolas Brierre Aziz of the Haitian Cultural Legacy Collection and NOMA's Katie A. Pfohl. She later authored the book *Sequin Artists of Haiti*, which honoured 12 flag-makers from Haiti, including Sylva Joseph and George Valris.

Tina Girouard, *Wall's Wallpaper III* (1974). Exhibition view: *With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985*, MOCA Grand Avenue, Los Angeles (27 October 2019–11 May 2020). Courtesy MOCA Grand Avenue. Photo: Jeff Mclane.

From playing a central part in New York's art scene, to wandering the 'Louisiana swamps and Voodoo societies in Haiti',[4] Girouard was an artist who evolved wherever she went. As she said in one 1982 interview, 'I believe one's life is made up of many parts, and that you get your world view or philosophy by adding up these parts.' [5]—**[O]**

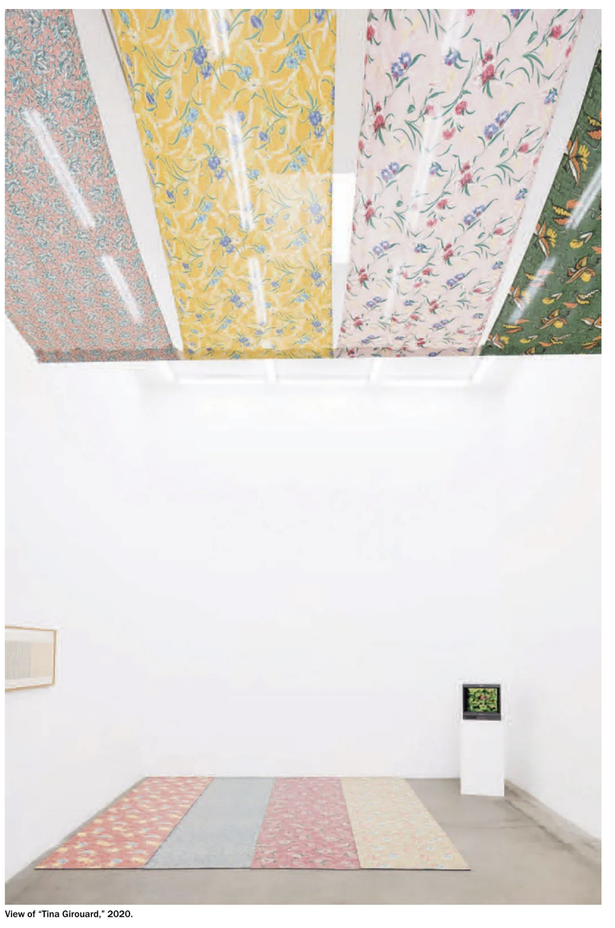
Artforum
Juy / August 2020

ARTFORUM

Tina Girouard

Anat Ebgi | Culver City

By Tausif Noor


View of "Tina Girouard," 2020.

On a visit to her native southwestern Louisiana around 1970, Tina Girouard inherited eight lengths of patterned 1940s silk from her mother-in-law, who had been given the material by a relative named Solomon Matlock. Rather than sew the material into wearable garments, Girouard decided to integrate the fabrics into her practice in New York City, where she had moved two years prior. Measuring three feet by twelve feet each, the Solomon's Lot fabrics, as they came to be known, are saturated in pastel tones and festooned with variegated floral and botanical patterns. When juxtaposed, as Girouard noticed, the textiles create formal and conceptual harmonies in color, scale, and content. To further unify her installations made with the fabrics, Girouard produced linoleum and wallpaper with similarly vertiginous designs and built movable screens using some of the fabrics.

Those partitions served an alternate purpose at the artist-run institution 112 Greene Street, where they were used as theatrical props and stage dividers by artists and performers such as Suzanne Harris and Gordon Matta-Clark.Girouard was a founder of the space, as she was of the nearby Clocktower Gallery and the artist-run restaurant Food; soon after her move to New York, she had become instrumental in the burgeoning avant-garde SoHo scene. In recent years, those alternative venues have been celebrated—not without a pervasive and perhaps misplaced nostalgia—in commercial and museum exhibitions.

Girouard's first solo outing in Los Angeles, "A Place That Has No Name: Early Works," was also the last during her lifetime; the artist passed away in April, at the age of seventy-three. The show focused on pieces she had displayed at 112 Greene Street in the 1970s and offered a glimpse of the artist's expansive practice, which includes painting, video, performance, and design. For the installation piece *Air Space Stage*, 1972, the artist draped four of the Solomon's Lot materials, in canary-yellow, pastel-pink, and deep-green palettes, across the gallery's ceiling to form a vibrant horizontal canopy in the white cube. Across the room, the floor-bound work *Blue Hole*, 1971, composed of four rectilinear pieces of linoleum arranged into a square, drew attention to the variations within and between the two works' similar surface patterns while emphasizing their material distinctions in weight, positioning, and transparency. Toward the front of the gallery, *Screen 4*, ca. 1974–75, brought such distinctions further to the fore: Girouard had stitched together square sections of fabric in varying opacities to form a floating grid that hung vertically at eye level from the ceiling.

Taken together, these three works functioned as a provisional architecture that gave the sterile gallery the familiar air of a domicile—a feeling enhanced by nearby wall-bound assemblages of patterned wallpaper made during this same period in the '70s. Such pieces situated Girouard within that decade's Pattern and Decoration movement, with which she would become strongly associated via her inclusion in John Perreault's 1977 exhibition "Pattern Painting" at New York's P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center (now known as moma ps1) and in the more recent, wide-ranging survey of the movement at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, during which this exhibition was on view.

What distinguished "A Place That Has No Name" was its subtle demonstration of how Girouard synthesized her conceptual and material interests through iteration and collaboration. A series of oil stick–on-paper sketches in four-by-four-inch grids, each framed and matted, employed colorful lines, dots, and geometric arrangements laid atop one another, highlighting the rhythmic repetition and nuanced variation that unite Girouard's work. For the film *Test Patterns*, 1973, looped on a nearby CRT monitor, the artist distended and tessellated images of flowers, oversaturated in hues ranging from indigo to hot pink, mimicking vibrant afterimages that linger on the retina.

Another monitor played documentation of *Grand Passe Partout*, a performance for the 1977 Paris Biennale, for which Girouard enlisted performers in a highly stylized dance that incorporated similar floral fabrics. Pairs of dancers clutched the short ends of lengths of fabric and glided across the courtyard of the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris in a ritualized pas de deux, eventually intersecting with the other duos to arrive at a maypole-like configuration. Echoing the visual effects of *Test Patterns*, the performers' movements transposed into real space the elaborate, nuanced experiments with color, pattern, and technique that defined Girouard's artistic practice for five decades.

Active Cultures
July 2020

Active Cultures

We Called Her General Girouard

Jonathan Griffin

An ad, printed in the Spring 1972 issue of *Avalanche* magazine, trumpeted in boldface type 'FOOD'S FISCAL FAMILY FACTS'. Most of the readers of *Avalanche* would, it was assumed, be at least part way familiar with FOOD, the restaurant opened in SoHo by artists Gordon Matta-Clark, Carol Goodden, Tina Girouard, Suzanne Harris, and Rachel Lew a few months earlier. It was already a fabulous success, and the Downtown art scene was tight knit in those days and more or less identical to *Avalanche's* readership. Also, FOOD was the only decent restaurant in the neighborhood.

Column one of the notice broke down FOOD's total income ($63,000 in investment and $104,120.72 in gross sales) and expenditure (food, dry goods, salaries, laundry, etc.—all the mundane requisites for running a restaurant). Happily, the figures for income and outgoings matched exactly, to the penny. Columns two and three inventoried the constituent parts of the operation: a list of materials, as if FOOD were an artwork, which in some senses it was.

By the end of the list I am in love with this family, before I even know who they are. There follows a paragraph of well over a hundred names, beginning with the founders and progressing through every person associated with the restaurant within the first few months of its existence. A few of those names are familiar to me—Phil Glass, Bob Rauschenberg (both *sic*), Keith Sonnier, Robert Altman, Ed Harris (the actor?), Mr. Peanuts—but most are not, even to Google.

"4 1/2 tons various flours for bread
16,000 oranges squeezed
379 lbs rabbits stewed
1,690 lbs celery chopped
3,050 lbs carrots juiced"

The list soon gets weird:

"4,081 chickens succumbed
708 lbs fish fucked
1,554 lettuce heads
15,660 potential chickens cracked"

It eventually degenerates into what seems to be a succession of fond in-jokes, listing "dogs asked to leave" (47); "bottles of champagne disappeared" (15); "keys lost" (3 3/4 lbs); "closing orders from health department" (1); "rebellions" (2 — "The Dishwasher Rebellion of Feb. '72" and "The Radio Rebellion of May '72"); "floods by Marco" (5), "made up Social Security numbers" (7); "people needed to get it together / keep it together" (213); and, finally, "free dinners given" (3,082).

Tina Girouard, the artist who died in April of this year, was not the most famous name attached to FOOD, nor even one of its original founders (Goodden and Matta-Clark, then a couple, came up with the idea, and enlisted help and investment from Harris and Lew before they dropped out and Girouard stepped in). In the famous photograph of Goodden, Matta-Clark, and Girouard standing outside the restaurant, which they adapted for the first FOOD ad in *Avalanche*, Girouard's birdlike frame is literally overshadowed by Goodden, who stands in front. Nevertheless, she toiled at the very epicenter of FOOD. Jane Crawford, Matta-Clark's widow (he died of cancer in 1978), describes her as "the nuts and bolts" of the operation. "They called her 'General Girouard'," she says.

Girouard was, by all accounts, always at the heart of things, even if she did not necessarily seek to be the center of attention. She was a giver: by temperament a host and cook. When she and her husband, the musician Dickie Landry, arrived in New York City from Louisiana in 1969, they found a spacious loft on Chatham Square, in Chinatown, which they shared with painter Mary Heilmann. Artists and musicians passing through town would crash there, and the Philip Glass Ensemble (of which Landry was a member) would rehearse. Some of them might have lived there, too. Girouard cooked, and people would just show up.

When, in 1970, the artist Jeffrey Lew founded with Matta-Clark the alternative art space 112 Greene Street, in Soho, Girouard was naturally involved. Crawford estimates that there were perhaps 300 people living in SoHo at that time, and most of them were artists, of one kind or another. They needed somewhere to gather. 112 Greene Street hosted exhibitions including architectural interventions by Matta-Clark as well as performances orchestrated by Philip Glass, dancer Trisha Brown, and experimental theater group Mabou Mines. It totally reimagined the pre-existing models for art or performance spaces. As Girouard later recalled, "We preferred to make our own arena, not the museums or the galleries."

The Downtown denizens of New York's art scene had a place to hang; now they needed somewhere to eat as well. SoHo was still mainly industrial, so its existing restaurants were mainly daytime luncheonettes. Goodden has recalled that, like Girouard, she often found herself catering for the flash mobs of friends who gathered at her table in the evenings. "No one had any money in those days, so if anyone had any money they would cook," Crawford told me. When Goodden received a significant inheritance, she decided to share it by investing in a restaurant. (Also, she would no longer be expected to provide food for free, even if she eventually did anyway.)

FOOD opened on the corner of Prince and Wooster Streets in October 1971. It was never designated as an artwork in name—except in as much as everything Matta-Clark leant his creative energy to could be considered an artwork—but it was designed as carefully and intentionally as any of his sculptures or installations, even if that design ran counter to economy and efficiency. He and Goodden chose wooden cabinets, despite the difficulty in keeping them clean, and tiled floors, despite the discomfort of working on them all day, and an open kitchen—one of the first restaurants to do so. They eschewed a dishwashing machine in favor of a real person, visibly present in the space, who would hand-clean dishes and earn a wage. The entire organization was tailored to artists who might need only occasional work, often at late notice, even if it meant that staffing schedules were a challenge.

Though there were a few other artists with Cajun roots in the Downtown scene of the time —Sonnier (who has also just passed away), Lynda Benglis, and Rauschenberg amongst them—Crawford says that Girouard carried her culture in a way that marked her as different. She hesitates to use the word "exotic". "She was very stylish, in her own way," Crawford says. "She would go with the flow. She could always manage situations flexibly, like Gordon—they both believed that art should be able to accommodate life."
simply of neat rows of dirt swept on the ground. Today Girouard is perhaps best known for her work with patterned bolts of fabric and wallpaper, assembled into space-defining rectangles on the floor or the ceiling. Food didn't specifically feature in Girouard's works, but home-making (and home un-making) was an ongoing preoccupation.

In some recollections, FOOD is described as a health-food restaurant, ahead of its time, using produce from small suppliers and simple, high-quality ingredients. (Chez Panisse in Berkeley and the Moosewood collective in Ithaca were roughly contemporaneous, though the chefs at FOOD claim to have known little to nothing about them.) In others, it is the more outlandish meals that are remembered, particularly the special Sunday dinners cooked by invited artists. Matta-Clark once served a meal he titled *Alive*, which included oysters and hard-boiled eggs filled with live brine shrimp.

The food Girouard cooked was, of course, influenced by Cajun and Creole cuisine, and was hearty and filling. Stews, soups, and gumbos were all regular offerings. Over time, Crawford observes, the portion sizes at FOOD became less generous, as it struggled to turn a profit. After a year and a half, the three original founders drifted away from the enterprise, burned out with the stress and too tired to devote themselves to their respective creative endeavors. It survived in name for many years more, but it was never the same restaurant again.

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The Brooklyn Rail
June 1 2020

THE BROOKLYN RAIL

With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art, 1972–1985

By Olivia Gauthier

Over the last few years, certain craft-based practices have re-emerged in fine art: the woven works of artists such as Diedrick Brackens or ceramics like those of Anna Sew Hoy. A certain nostalgia is exuded in the renaissance of craft aesthetics—the vibe of the 70s ripples throughout art, design, and fashion as exemplified by the resurgent interest in macramé, needlepoint, and clay. Until recently, the recuperation of craft aesthetics in fine art has gone largely unnoticed by critical histories. *With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles presents an affirmative and celebratory survey of a less-studied yet deeply influential movement that presents a historical background for some of the trends we see in contemporary art today.

Organized by Anna Katz with Rebecca Lowery, the exhibition features nearly 100 works of art by almost 50 artists from across the country, taking an expansive view on the Pattern and Decoration movement (P&D) and its broad reach. Katz's approach to revisiting the history and dynamics of P&D takes a three-pronged approach in terms of artists included: core members of the official P&D movement, artists who are not usually recognized as P&D artists but were very influenced by the movement or were interlocutors, and artists who are not normally considered P&D artists at all but who were using similar aesthetic and conceptual approaches. What results is a winding arabesque of maximalism and materiality, brimming in color and exuberantly embracing a sincere interest in the aesthetics of what could be considered domestic or traditional crafts: quilting, wallpaper, florals, weaving, pottery, and architectural or design motifs.

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Perhaps the most compelling argument the exhibition makes about the importance of P&D and its core tenets is pattern-and-decoration's use as an aesthetic tool against hegemonic ideas of what serious fine art must look like. Working against the Abstract Expressionism of the past and the Minimalist art en vogue at the time, artists working in and around the aesthetics of P&D rejected the cool and removed aesthetics of idealized abstraction, instead declaring that taste is subjective and art must be accepted in all forms, not only those that tended to be defined by largely white and largely male audiences.

For the most part, the works in the exhibition speak for themselves: densely patterned surfaces, fecund florals, and swirling arabesques abound. Unconventional materials permeate throughout—glitter, wallpaper, beads, silk, flocking, celastic, ribbons, feathers, sequins—materials normally associated with craft or domestic arts. What transpires is the visual antithesis to dominant art world trends of the time, aesthetics which negate the tenets of a modernism that favored clean lines, an invisible hand, monochrome industrial colors. Joyce Kozloff, who was a key member of P&D, wrote a polemic in the form of a pamphlet in 1976 called "An Answer to Ad Reinhardt's 'On Negation' - Negating the Negative" which accompanied a group exhibition at Tony Alessandra Gallery (and is reprinted as a wall vinyl in the exhibition); in it she denounced values associated with modernism and patriarchal culture: "anti-pure... anti-formalist... anti-imperialist... anti-universal... anti-rational... anti-dogmatic... anti-pleasureless... anti-heroic... anti-master." Instead, she affirms "additive, subjective, romantic, imaginative, personal, autobiographical, whimsical." What Kozloff argues for is a value shift, one clearly in the feminist spirit ("the personal is political"), that she and other artists found P&D's freedom of expression, liberation from controlling narratives of the art world, and the genuine pleasure found in indulging in sumptuously ornamental, material, and colorful aesthetics. This, as Katz makes clear in her contextualization of P&D, was not celebrating kitsch or bad taste in an ironic way but was a deeply genuine exaltation of the decorative.

Toward the end of the show is Tina Girouard's meditative video *Maintenance III* (1973). Unassuming at first glance, the video shows Girouard caring for fabrics she inherited—washing, wringing, sewing, and folding them while a popular radio station plays in the background. Girouard highlights this mundane activity, focusing the camera on the fabrics as the patterns dance across the screen. Made in the year between Nixon's impeachment, reelection, and eventual resignation, and approaching the end of the Vietnam war, Girouard's video is a subtle rumination on the cultivation of taste in culture (music) and a deep questioning of authority at the intersection of American culture and politics. *Maintenance III* meditates on a seemingly neutral act: as the artist listens to upbeat tunes on the radio, there is a subtle critical undertone pointing out that the radio, a symbol of mass media, is itself not neutral. The same messenger of popular music also influences our political environment.

Revisiting the exhibition while in quarantine reminds us of the myriad ways in which art can help us to envision new methods and strategies for challenging the powers that be and reimagining a world that is inclusive, diverse, loving, and celebratory of all forms of expression. It is no surprise that the similar ethics of the P&D movement have percolated in recent years. As Joyce Kozloff and Valerie Jaudon wrote in their 1978 Heresies article, "We, as artists, cannot solve these problems, but by speaking plainly we hope to reveal the inconsistencies in assumptions that too often have been accepted as 'truth.'" Let us continue to question these truths.

Artforum
June 1 2020

ARTFORUM

TINA GIROUARD (1946–2020)

By Jessamyn Fiore

TINA GIROUARD inspires. I do not mean inspiration as a kind of soft note in one's own monologue of self-discovery but rather as a call to action. Tina inspires because she calls one to the challenge of living fully. With Tina, creative energy poured into every act of being human, of being alive, of being —cooking, eating, dancing, talking, making, laughing, crying, loving.

Photograph of video performance artwork *Maintenance I*, 1970. © Estate of Tina Girouard, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

FOOD

Tina fed people. I remember being around ten years old and watching Tina make a big pot of gumbo in our loft on Twentieth Street. The ritual of cooking, in Tina's hands, was a kind of mystical experience, one that in being slow and deliberate offered time for our conversations and her stories—about people and art I had never dreamed of, my imagination boiling over with the possibility of life becoming this full, vivid adventure. I remember the chicken feet sticking out of the pot—they were for enhancing the flavor, she told me. It seemed at once so elemental and exotic, like a magic potion brewing.

The scent would get caught in the wind and draw people to her. They would all just show up and begin swirling around her pot, as if she had summoned them there. There was always a party when Tina came through town, with music playing, friends dancing. The gumbo was the center point, filling bowls, then stomachs.

What I witnessed was a ritual that began well before I was born. In 1969, Tina moved from Louisiana to New York City and into a building in Chinatown's Chatham Square with Richard Landry and Mary Heilmann, where the Philip Glass Ensemble would regularly rehearse and performers passing through the city would crash. Fairly quickly, her kitchen became the epicenter of a budding art scene. Her meals drew people in, binding together artists as community, giving them a structure around which they could socialize and collaborate.

Still image of Tina Girouard from *Food* by Gordon Matta-Clark, 1972, 16 mm film transferred to HD video, black and white, sound, 43 minutes.

In 1971, together with Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark, Tina opened the restaurant FOOD, which was a kind of sister space to 112 Greene Street. FOOD gave jobs to those who needed them, fed the neighborhood, and hosted food art performances**.** It has been a source of creative inspiration for generations since. In Matta-Clark's film about the restaurant from 1972, it's clear that Tina was at the heart of FOOD, just as she was at 112 Greene Street and the Anarchitecture group.

LANGUAGE

I do not make a distinction between art on a wall and a performance.

When I was invited in 2010 to curate an exhibition and edit a book about 112 Greene Street at David Zwirner, the first interview I wanted to conduct was with Tina. Having grown up hearing so many stories about downtown New York in the early '70s, I dreamed of putting together a narrative oral history for the book that captured the voices of the artists involved. My mother and I flew down to Louisiana to visit Tina at her home in Cecilia, where we spent hours talking and looking through her archive.

Tina's artworks and performances embraced art and life as one, always inviting others to join in, as participation made the work—the work was life lived. She began by making a series of "houses" in 1971. *Hung House* was the first, made in the Chatham Square building. She collected all the stuff around the apartment left by guests from rehearsals and parties, and pulled it together into a house, composed of two floors (the second was a platform suspended from the ceiling). The second work, *Live House*, was a kind of extension of *Hung House*, done at 112 Greene Street. She asked others to join her in using materials that evoke domestic space and ritual to create rooms. Goodden made "the back porch" in the basement by stringing up a hammock and putting live crickets between two screens in the window, so you could listen to the chirping while lying down. The third iteration was *Swept House*. Made under the Brooklyn Bridge as part of *The Brooklyn Bridge Event*, curated by Alanna Heiss, the work involved sweeping architectural outlines in the dirt and using on-site garbage—a thrown-away stove anchored the kitchen, for example.

During our 2010 conversation—parts of which were published in the resulting book—Tina described how the local street kids ended up becoming her performers:

TG: I'm from Louisiana so take me to the water, you know? We were right there in Chinatown and found out very quickly about the fish market and the base of the Brooklyn Bridge. We'd go picnic there, we'd go hang out there . . . It was a beautiful place to be, so yeah, all I needed was a broom.

JF: So you swept?

TG: You know when you're kids? We all made houses by just piling up sticks. Or maybe that's just me, maybe everybody didn't but I sure did. To do these outlines as a kid I remember if I made a room and somebody went to step over this line of dust you were like, "No, no, no!"

Polaroid of Gordon Matta-Clark, Tina Girouard, and Suzanne Harris, c. 1975.

The kids in the hood, they were attracted to me and they started bringing me food. They thought I was a bum or street person and so they started helping me cause all the other guys had hammers and they were making noise and there I was sweeping.

So when the event happened the kids were my performers . . . The kids helped me and they would not have come to see this—to experience this—if they hadn't recognized me as someone like themselves, you know?

All of her later works in New York grew out of this series—artworks that were continually transformed by participants and visitors. Tina's houses transcend traditional architecture—they weren't constructed with walls and doors and windows, but rather they were defined and activated by the people who occupied them, the rituals and stuff of living together.

House is a performance. House is communal consensus in space that "this is a house."

LANGUAGE

After the 112 Greene Street exhibition opened in 2011, Tina gifted me a pencil-on-paper drawing with a series of nine symbols arranged in three rows of three, which she made in 1979, one year after moving back to Louisiana from New York. She told me she wanted to create a universal language that everyone could understand. Some of the symbols are figurative, while others are slightly more abstract but still relatable—geometric lines and shapes, abstract assemblies that evoke limbs, water, or wind. The inclusivity of her work in the New York years—the constant bringing together of people as a means of universal communication—would later be expressed in this hieroglyphic system, which she would layer in both physical artworks and in performance.

Dazzling. It is a word that must be used to describe the large sequin flags Tina made in collaboration with a community of Haitian artists in the 1990s, when she set up a studio in Port-au-Prince. Visually dense yet shining bright, these works layer coded language with imagery of flora and fauna, Vodou and Christian religious iconography, playing cards, instruments, guns, the four elements, patterns, explosive colors, and more. The sequins and beads glisten, busy and swirling like the rush of great conversation, explosive laughter, stamping feet to drumbeats. Tina's connection to Haiti began in Lafayette, Louisiana, where she was a founding codirector of the Festival International de Louisiane, in 1987. Artists were invited from Haiti to participate, and she began visiting Haiti herself. On one trip to the capital, she met a kindred spirit, Antoine Oleyant, and they began collaborating on "Under A Spell," a project that eventually resulted in a substantial exhibition of the same name that opened at the CAC New Orleans in 1993 and traveled widely. Oleyant died suddenly in 1992. In the aftermath of this loss, Tina embraced his community and they embraced her. She lived and worked in Port-au-Prince for long stretches of time, collaborating on works with accomplished sequin artists such as George Valris and Edgar Jean-Louis, and even published a definitive book on the subject, *Sequin Artists of Haiti* (1994).

David Bradshaw and Tina Girouard in Mardi Gras parade in New Orleans, c. 1995. Photo: Robert Fiore.

When I was fifteen years old, my mother and I visited Tina in Port-au-Prince, a trip that completely blew my young mind. Tina moved seamlessly through the city, where we were welcomed warmly and introduced to a great many artists and thinkers, too. Jean-Louis, a Vodou houngan, took us on a tour of the city cemetery, showing us the brightly painted tombs, teaching us Haitian history, pointing out the places of white and black magic rituals. At the Hotel Oloffson, I remember vividly lying on a bed outside on the balcony, listening to the city noise bubble up beyond the garden wall. A Rara band would march past in the night, the music fading up, then down into the din of life surrounding us.

Tina in studio with Grand Bois in Haiti. © Estate of Tina Girouard, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

I will never be able to divorce the presence and energy of Tina from this experience of life as astonishment. She opened up the world to me. She stirred the pot to feed us, danced the rhythm to move us, built the house so we all could be together, and generated the language so we could all join in the great conversation.

New Orleans Museum of Art
May 13 2020

A curator's tribute to Louisiana-born artist Tina Girouard

Tina Girouard created elaborately beaded Vodou flags in collaboration with Haitian artists.

Tina Girouard, a Lousiana-born artist who became a key figure in the New York art scene of the 1960s and '70s, died on April 21 at age 73. Born in 1946 in DeQuincy, Louisiana, Girouard frequently focused her art on Francophone cultures in her home state and beyond. In the 1990s she worked in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, among local artists and wrote a book on the use of sequins in Haitian art. She also crafted sequined works of her own that pay homage to Vodou flags honoring spirits known as lwa. "Something within us all is unknowable and unchangeable," she once wrote, adding, "Life and death form a whole as we flow along our mystical voyage—a delicate, solo dance." Girouard's most recent exhibition at NOMA, Bondye: Between and Beyond, featured sequined prayer flags inspired by twelve lwa (spirits) of Vodou. Curator Nic Aziz shares his thoughts in this tribute to the artist.

Throughout much of the eighteenth century, rebellions swept across the Caribbean and South America. Enslaved Africans, often allied with free people of color, were constantly fighting for the abolition of slavery and freedom from colonial power. Ironically, these rebellions were often influenced by British and French seamen who shared news of insurrections in other locales, most notably the French Revolution. The common bonds between the oppressive experiences of these seamen and the enslaved Africans created unique bonds—to the point that many Africans during this period buried seamen who died on these islands in their cemeteries.

While the end of slavery was the primary goal of these rebellions, there was another arguably even more harmful transgression whose eradication was significant to the insurgents—race. As formerly enslaved Africans began to take control of Saint-Domingue (now known as Haiti) at the end of the eighteenth century, and word of this uprising began to spread throughout the Caribbean and the world, the rejection of societies being rooted in racialist ideologies spread to other nations. In his book A History of Jamaica, originally published in 1807, author Robert Renny references a song that was frequently sung in the streets of Kingston in 1799:

One, two, tree,
All de same;
Black, white, brown,
All de same:
All de same.

This song-based example of an egalitarian society free of racial hierarchy is one that would eventually be attempted, but unfortunately never fully realized due to many of the deeply damaging ramifications of race's creation. Race is a construct that, since its inception, has impacted nearly every aspect of human existence. Its effects have led present-day scholars, such as Professor Barbara J. Fields, to extensively study the phenomenon and create new fields of study and terms such as "racecraft." While many of us can acknowledge the illusory nature of race, due to its implications, particularly over the last four hundred years of human history, we must simultaneously acknowledge its complex impact on how we have and continue to exist.

When I was asked to co-curate Tina's exhibition of Vodou prayer flags with Katie Pfohl toward the end of 2018, the concept of "race" was at the forefront of my thinking. I was somewhat familiar with her artistic practice, but I was much more familiar with the fact that she was an artist of European descent making Haitian flags. As a Haitian-American, and someone who has done extensive Haiti-centered work in New Orleans since 2015, my curiosity was naturally piqued. Curating this exhibition provided me with an opportunity to learn more about my culture and this specific aspect of Tina's practice as an artist while also creating space for me and our museum visitors to explore complex issues related to race, culture, and appropriation.

From these initial inquiries, I believe that there were two particular curatorial decisions that improved the exhibition's efficacy. The first was the exhibition's name, which was altered to Bondye: Between and Beyond, in an effort to illuminate Haiti's deeply underdiscussed influence on New Orleans and the world. "Bondye" is regarded as the supreme being within the Vodou religion, a religious practice whose roots exist in modern-day Benin and arrived in New Orleans largely with an influx of migrants following the end of the Saint-Domingue Revolution in 1804. Second was the development of a program at NOMA that would give our community the opportunity to engage in a discussion around the more controversial aspects of the exhibition, such as cultural appropriation. This became a panel discussion held in March 2019, entitled "Considering Cultural Exchange," which was an extremely rich conversation around appropriation, exchange, and collaboration. Despite these and other curatorial aims, there were still criticisms of the exhibition. Some of these critiques were warranted, however I believe that their existence in our collective conversations affirmed the power of art. "Great art," as I have come to learn, has the ability to spur questions and dialogue from the viewer—and in this case the story behind the work created just as many, if not more, of both.

Tina's dedication to Haiti was unceasing from her first moments engaging with the country. After twenty years of researching Haiti's connection to her native Louisiana, she traveled to the country for the first time in 1990. In her book, Sequin Artists of Haiti, she refers to an almost immediate love and desire to live and work there after only several days traveling through Port-au-Prince and Jacmel. Through her travels, she was able to learn about the beauty and technical aspects of the sequin art practice while also noticing the practice's deficiencies due to a lack of both artist credit on works and the dearth of women sequin artists.

Just before leaving Haiti during this first trip, Tina visited the renowned Hotel Oloffson where master sequin artist Antoine Oleyant had a studio at the time which was known as "Atelier Simbi." In her account of the meeting, Tina reveals that she "froze" upon entry as she was struck by one particular piece, "a spectacular rendering of a bull." This bull was Bossou, the lwa (Vodou spirit) who releases earth's bounty as the master of agriculture. Tina purchased the Bossou piece and used it to propose an exhibition of Antoine's work for the 1991 Festival International in Lafayette where she served as the president of the board of directors. At the festival, Antoine apparently greatly admired a "good luck" hat that Tina wore and right before he left Lafayette for New York to continue showcasing his works, Tina put the hat on Antoine's head and said "see you in Haiti." This small gesture of respect and admiration would become Tina's first official artistic exchange with Antoine and the larger Haitian community.

When Tina revisited Haiti later that year and returned to Antoine's studio, he welcomed her by wearing the lucky hat, which he had since decorated with sequins. He had also created another one for himself and the two artists began collaborating to create work that blended Western images from Tina's life experiences with Haitian imagery from Antoine's. As Tina wrote in her book: "Never intending to appropriate a traditional Haitian art form, my desire was to come to a point of collaboration naturally. Open to sharing our separate ideas, techniques, and cultures, we wanted to achieve that goal spontaneously by working side by side." The beauty in this intent and exchange is paramount—and it led to Tina establishing her own studio and spending the next five years in Haiti working with other master sequin artists such as Georges Valris and Edgar Jean-Louis. They would create Vodou flags that I would have the honor of curating for display in NOMA's Great Hall nearly twenty-five years later.

The stories that emerge from this period of her artistic practice could simply be described as "exceptionally human"—and this exceptionality is something that I felt deeply during my time working on the exhibition and the two times that I met her. *–Nic Aziz*

The New York Times
April 28 2020

The New York Times

Tina Girouard, Experimental Artist in 1970s SoHo, Dies at 73

She was a founder of Food, an influential artist-run kitchen in Manhattan, and a member of the alternative art space 112 Greene Street.

Tina Girouard, a risk-taking artist from Louisiana, performed at an international arts festival in 1978 in Graz, Austria. She and others explored ideas of architecture, the body, community and urban space in the midst of a New York City falling into ruin. The Estate of Tina Girourd/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Tina Girouard, a risk-taking artist from rural Louisiana who played a catalytic role in the 1970s SoHo art scene in New York, helping to found the experimental gallery 112 Greene Street and the artist-run restaurant Food, died on April 21 at her home in Cecilia, La. She was 73.

Amy Bonwell, a niece, said the cause was a stroke.

Arriving in New York City fresh out of college in 1969, Ms. Girouard plugged almost immediately into the performance, dance and conceptual-art circles that, fueled by their tumultuous times, were reshaping the art world.

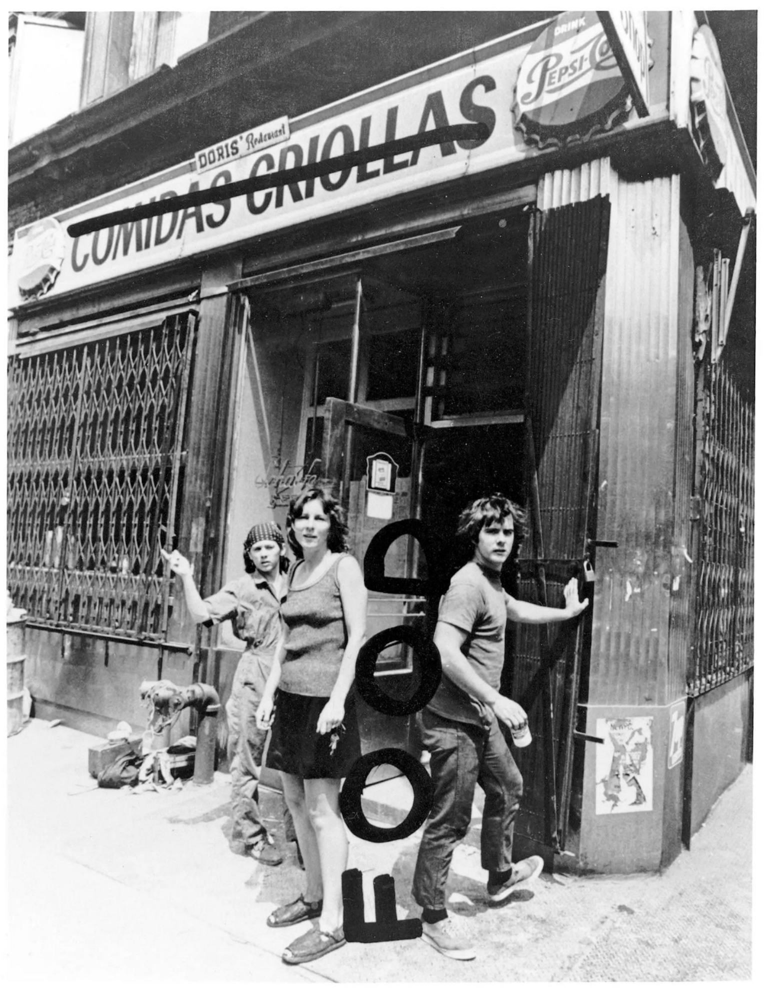
In 1971, for a group show organized by the curator Alanna Heiss on a condemned pier beneath the Brooklyn Bridge, Ms. Girouard presented "Swept House," a spartan performance and ephemeral sculpture in which she used a broom to shuffle dust into lines depicting the floor plan of a house.

The work dovetailed with that of other artists at the time — among them Gordon Matta-Clark, Joan Jonas, Vito Acconci and Alan Saret — who were exploring ideas of architecture, the body, community and urban space in the midst of a city rapidly falling into ruin.

Ms. Girouard saw such art as a form of radical speech. "We really wanted to change America," she said in 2010 in an interview with the curator Jessamyn Fiore. "Or maybe it's that we wanted to hold on to the true nature of what we thought America was or should be."

In addition to performance, Ms. Girouard used found and inherited fabrics, wallpaper and floor coverings to create installations, work that came to be part of the renegade mid-1970s movement known as Pattern and Decoration.

And she was among the early adopters of video technology. In "Tape-Video Live," a 1972 performance at the Leo Castelli Gallery, she and three other dancers played with the spatial and temporal jigsaw combinations of live, live-broadcast and previously recorded dance movements.



Tina Girouard, left, with Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark in front of Food, their artist-run restaurant at the corner of Prince and Wooster Streets in SoHo in 1971. Richard Landry, alteration by Gordon Matta-Clark, via David Zwirner, New York

Cynthia Marie Girouard was born May 26, 1946 in DeQuincy, La., in the southwest part of the state, and grew up with five siblings on a rice and cattle farm in an unincorporated community so small that it had no name. Her mother, Yvelle Marie (Theriot) Girouard, was a special-education teacher, and her father, Whitney Lewis Girouard, was a farmer who later taught agricultural engineering.

At the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette) Ms. Girouard met Dickie Landry, a saxophone player, composer and later a member of the Philip Glass Ensemble, and fell in with a group of musicians who had deep Cajun roots. In a conversation in the art magazine Avalanche in 1973, Ms. Girouard said that living around jazz and blues musicians instilled in her a conviction that art was, at its core, collaborative.

In the winter of 1969, she and Mr. Landry drove to New York City and soon, along with the painter Mary Heilmann, moved into a near-derelict building in Chinatown at 10 Chatham Square. It soon became a bunkhouse for dozens of artists and musicians over a fevered six years.

"We could have struck a match and the whole building would have burned down — it was a dump," said Mr. Landry, who married Ms. Girouard in 1971. "But then again, Tina and I had two entire floors for $500. Everything was very revved up. Tina just fed off of that. We all fed off of each other. We ate together and played together and some of us slept together."

Ms. Girouard and other Chatham occupants were among the cross-pollinating members of 112 Greene Street, an improvisational art space in SoHo that the sculptor Jeffrey Lew and his wife, Rachel Wood, a dancer, opened in 1970, along with Mr. Saret and Mr. Matta-Clark.

Ms. Girouard joined forces with Mr. Matta-Clark, Caroline Goodden and Suzanne Harris to found the restaurant Food in 1971, at Prince and Wooster Streets, envisioning it as a kind of culinary performance space and service-industry employment agency for artists.

The restaurant pioneered now-common dining innovations like seasonal ingredients, an open kitchen and an internationally eclectic menu. It served sushi before most New Yorkers knew what that was, advertised as "raw mackerel with wasabi sauce."

The space lasted not quite three years in its original incarnation, done in partly by its determination to avoid conventionality at all costs. In a short 1972 movie about the restaurant, "Food," shot partly by Robert Frank, Ms. Girouard can be seen rolling and passing a joint in the kitchen as she tries to figure out who will take a Sunday breakfast shift. In an interview with The New York Times in 2007, she said, "We put our hearts and souls and butts into that place."

Her New York years, however prolific, did not last long. Ms. Girouard returned to Louisiana in 1978 and there, with Mr. Landry, bought an old general store and moved it to the small town of Cecilia, about 15 miles northeast of Lafayette. After they divorced in 1991, Ms. Girouard worked for several years in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, making traditional sequined-and-beaded voodoo flags with Haitian artists.

In addition to her niece Ms. Bonwell, she is survived by her siblings Gloria Nell Girouard Bonwell, Barbara Cecile Girouard Martin, Norman Wade Girouard and Jacqueline Anne Girouard and a sister-in-law, Billie Johnson Girouard.

Ms. Girouard's work was included in "With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art, 1972-1985," which opened last fall at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. A recreation of one of her most important performances, "Pinwheel," from 1977, was presented last year by the Anat Ebgi gallery at Art Basel Miami Beach.

After leaving New York, Ms. Girouard spent time in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, making sequined-and-beaded voodoo flags like this one with Haitian artists. The Estate of Tina Girouard/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York. by Photo by R. Alokhin, via The New Orleans Museum of Art

Ms. Girouard's "Walls Wallpaper," 1971. She used fabrics, wallpaper and floor coverings, work that came to be part of the renegade mid-1970s movement known as Pattern and Decoration. The Estate of Tina Girouard/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Artforum
April 24 2014

ARTFORUM

TINA GIROUARD (1946–2020)

April 24, 2020

Tina Girouard. Photo: Anat Ebgi Gallery.

American artist Tina Girouard, whose multimedia conceptual practice was infused with symbolism, narrative, and strains of post-Minimalism and Pattern and Decoration, died on Tuesday at her home in Cecilia, Louisiana. She was seventy-three years old. A pivotal figure in the 1970s SoHo art scene and its alternative spaces—such as 112 Greene Street and the restaurant FOOD—Girouard's work included performances such as Pinwheel, 1977, in which the artist acted as both director and performer. That nearly hour-long piece, featuring three other collaborators, was set in a stage with hanging, silk-patterned fabrics, and unfolded as each player ritually performed their personae (animal, vegetable, mineral, and other). Originally presented alongside work by Lynda Benglis, Richard Landry, Robert Rauschenberg, and Keith Sonnier at the New Orleans Museum of Art's 1977 exhibition "Five From Louisiana," the work was restaged at Art Basel Miami Beach last year.

Girouard was born in 1946 in DeQuincy, Louisiana. After studying at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette, she moved to New York in the late 1960s, where she shared a loft in Chinatown with Dickie Landry and the Philip Glass Ensemble. There, she helped nurture a downtown ethos of collaboration. From 1971 to 1974, together with artists Gordon Matta-Clark and Carol Goodden, she ran FOOD, a conceptual performance and artwork offering her milieu both sustenance and a gathering place in SoHo. She also collaborated with artists Laurie Anderson, Deborah Hay, Terry Riley, Richard Serra, and Lawrence Weiner, among others, and was a founding participant of spaces such as the Anarchitecture Group, Clocktower Gallery, Creative Time, the Fabric Workshop, Holly Solomon Gallery, and PS1.

“It’s a live performance and I use the same kind of form—there are repeated objects, and the difference here is that people are performing them into place, a kind of ritual placement,” Girouard said in a 1982 interview. “I believe one's life is made up of many parts, and that you get your world view or philosophy by adding up these parts.”

Girouard returned to Louisiana in 1979. In 1983, she was the subject of a midcareer retrospective at the Museo Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City, and her work has been exhibited at the Venice Biennale (1980); the Paris Biennale (1977); and Documenta, Kassel (1972 and 1977). Her work is held in the collections of the Hessel Museum of Art, the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College; the Institute of Contemporary Art, the University of Pennsylvania; the Ludwig Forum für International Kunst; the Museo Rufino Tamayo; and the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst. “With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985,” curated by Anna Katz and currently on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, features her work and will travel to the Hessel Museum of Art in June.

Burnaway
February 2 2019

BURNAWAY

Tina Girouard, 1946 – 2020
Written by: Daniel Fuller

Tina Girouard, Pinwheel, 1977. © 2019 Tina Girouard / Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Tina Girouard was born in DeQuincy, Louisiana, in 1946. In the 1960s and 70s, she maintained a studio in New York's Chinatown and actively participated in some of the earliest shows of video and performance art at now iconic independent spaces still operating today: 112 Greene St. (now White Columns), the Clocktower, PS1, Creative Time, Performance Art, and the Fabric Workshop in Philadelphia. In 1971, Girouard teamed up with Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark to open a space that would both feed and give jobs to artists working in a then desolate SoHo. FOOD was a restaurant-via-art installation, it was a community, and most of all, it was a complete and total work of art. After ten years in New York, a substantial fire devastated Girouard's studio, which resulted in her move back to Louisiana.

Tina Girouard, DAMBALA, 1991; sequins, beads, fabric, 43 by 72 inches.

There have been deep ties between New Orleans and Haiti since 1804, when the city's population doubled, welcoming 12,000 formerly enslaved and free people of color who arrived following the twelve-year Haitian Revolution. Those influences and bonds are still palpable. In 1990, Girouard took a studio space in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and dedicated herself to producing her first book, Sequin Artists of Haiti, which was published in 1994. The book focused on the St. Louis family: Sylva Joseph, Edgar Jean-Louis, and George Valris, artists who make sequined prayer flags for communal gatherings, offerings, and rituals tied to Haitian Vodou.

The flags celebrate Vodou's multicultural roots, representing its blending of West African, French and Spanish Catholic traditions, and, of course, Haitian spiritual practices. From 1991 through 1995, Girouard collaborated with Antoine Oleyant and several others to create large beaded and sequined Vodou drapos. Together, they created Girouard's "Iwa" series, unifying Haitian symbolism with Louisiana influences. Her exhibition of these flags, Bondye: Between and Beyond, was on view at the New Orleans Museum of Art in 2019 and was easily one of my favorite exhibitions of the year. Girouard's work posits an interconnected world grounded in creativity that invites us to consider how we exist between different communities.

Tina Girouard has died at the age of 73.

Artforum
June 2013
ARTFORUM

"Gordon Matta-Clark, Suzanne Harris, Tina Girouard: 112 Greene Street Years"

Written by Zachary Cahill

View of "Gordon Matta-Clark, Suzanne Harris, Tina Girouard: The 112 Greene Street Years," 2013.

Strip away the thick nostalgia that lards our collective memory of the art scene tied to SoHo in the early 1970s, and the vital attributes of the exhibition "The 112 Greene Street Years" at Rhona Hoffman Gallery shine through with a revelatory freshness. This is in large measure because curator Jessamyn Fiore (the daughter of Gordon Matta-Clark's widow Jane Crawford) has opted to focus on the collaborative working relationships that existed between Gordon Matta-Clark, Suzanne Harris, and Tina Girouard, thereby keeping faith in the substance from which much of our present-day romanticized mythology of the time period derives.

By counter intuitively giving equal weight to each artist (and not solely focusing on the well-known male of the trio), the exhibition presents each of the artists' work on its own terms, even as it provides the vivid atmosphere of the art's context. Throughout the show there is a lightness of touch and commitment to whimsy, as well as something like a nonconformist politics of play—a taste of which can be found in Matta-Clark's Open House, 1972, a film that documents a quasi-architectural installation in a Dumpster along with a group performance in the rain with umbrellas that occurred on the day of the opening. All of this suggests another mode of being in the world together, an alternative to the dominant sociopolitical paradigms of a time scarred by the Vietnam War and racial strife.

Defying gravity in her film Flying Machine, 1973, Suzanne Harris suspends herself and another participant off the ground by an intricate pulley system, engaging in a trapeze artist-like dance. Tina Girouard's linoleum floor piece and fabric screens combine ornamental floral patterns with a Minimalist compositional logic that feels almost more than contemporary, despite the fact that their motifs have an air of the anachronistic about them, evocative of early-twentieth-century wallpaper and the Victorian-era art of pressed flowers. In a 1973 interview in Avalanche (quoted in the press release), Girouard stated, "I want [art] to be still breathing." Here in Chicago, almost a half a century later, it is.

Rhona Hoffman Gallery
1711 West Chicago Avenue
June 14 – August 9, 2013

The New York Times
May 10 2013

The New York Times

Food Matters | When Eating and Art Became One

Richard Landry, courtesy of the Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark and David Zwirner, New York/London
Tina Girouard, Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark outside FOOD, before its opening in 1971.

A few months before the artists Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark opened their restaurant-slash-art installation, FOOD, on the corner of Prince and Wooster Streets in New York City in the fall of 1971, they roasted a pig beneath the Brooklyn Bridge. Alanna Heiss, who would soon found P.S.1, installed work by Matta-Clark, Carl Andre, Sol Le Witt and Keith Sonnier in a raw, junk-filled space. On nearby Pier 14, Philip Glass performed and the year-old avant-garde theater company Mabou Mines staged a Samuel Beckett play. The artist Tina Girouard, who would cook at FOOD during its nearly three-year run, helped out with the hog. “The pig burnt on the outside,” she recalled, “and raw on the inside.”

Even so, the notion of eating fresh food communally — as both an artistic and gastronomic statement — struck a chord. SoHo needed a good restaurant. Artists needed a place to gather. And Goodden was sick of spending all her money on dinner parties. In 1971, you didn't have to be Keith McNally to open a restaurant downtown. "We were all doing it," recalled Girouard, then well known in downtown circles for her Chatham Square loft parties, "because we wanted to." FOOD was fueled by artists' desires.

From the Dutch master Abraham Van Beyeren's louche, luminous lobster (circa 1650) to the Pop artist Claes Oldenburg's sculptural plate of French fries and ketchup (1963), there has always been a link between art and food. But the notion of calling soup performance and bread installation and considering that butter might be a significant component of a total work of art? Or the idea that bones from dinner could be made into accessories and passed along as parting gifts after dessert (which Matta-Clark did)? That kind of thinking felt fresh, and anchored an idea that is still playing out in the art world and in buzz-worthy restaurants that seem to open practically every week.

*John Berens/Frieze*A tribute to FOOD at this year's Frieze New York.

Rirkrit Tiravanija began his career in 1990 by cooking pad thai for gallery-goers at Paula Allen Gallery, and his work has continued to feature large helpings of tom ka soup and Thai green curry ever since. In 2011, Phoebe Washburn built a wood-and-plastic fort called "Nunderwater Nort Lab," set it up at Zach Feuer and served lunch. Last year at Frieze, Gavin Brown (Tiravanija's gallerist) and Mark Ruffalo served up sausages to protest fracking. Meanwhile, in the restaurant world, every new establishment seems to be angling to become somebody's clubhouse — a for-profit hangout for a targeted clientele where everything and everyone is served with intention. On occasion, that clientele still includes artists, though not in SoHo. But a few years back, before Roberta's became *Roberta's*, the only people there were Bushwick artists who wanted to take a break from their studios across the street to eat pizza with like-minded company. They needed the restaurant. The restaurant needed them. For a minute, Roberta's was FOOD.

The continuing relevance of this generation-old idea is the reason this year's Frieze Art Fair is paying homage to FOOD with a four-day reincarnation of the establishment. (A Roberta's pop-up is nearby.) Goodden and Girouard are both cooking. Goodden is making some of the restaurant's famous soups (cauliflower and watercress, and Spanish-style carrot). Girouard is taking another stab at that pig roast. The artists Matthew Day Jackson, who was born in 1974, and Jonathan Horowitz, who was 5 when FOOD opened, are cooking as well. "I was interested to see what it would mean to bring FOOD back in 2013 and see what happens when food and art intertwine," said Cecillia Alemani, the curator of the Frieze Projects program, which includes FOOD. "Many contemporary artists look at food with the same eyes Gordon Matta-Clark did, as malleable, simple ingredients that, in the right hands, can be magically transformed into something completely different. Which in the end is what art does."

Even so, the notion of eating fresh food communally — as both an artistic and gastronomic statement — struck a chord. SoHo needed a good restaurant. Artists needed a place to gather. And Goodden was sick of spending all her money on dinner parties. In 1971, you didn't have to be Keith McNally to open a restaurant downtown. "We were all doing it," recalled Girouard, then well known in downtown circles for her Chatham Square loft parties, "because we wanted to." FOOD was fueled by artists' desires.

From the Dutch master Abraham Van Beyeren's louche, luminous lobster (circa 1650) to the Pop artist Claes Oldenburg's sculptural plate of French fries and ketchup (1963), there has always been a link between art and food. But the notion of calling soup performance and bread installation and considering that butter might be a significant component of a total work of art? Or the idea that bones from dinner could be made into accessories and passed along as parting gifts after dessert (which Matta-Clark did)? That kind of thinking felt fresh, and anchored an idea that is still playing out in the art world and in buzz-worthy restaurants that seem to open practically every week.

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Alanna Heiss, who would soon found P.S.1, installed work by Matta-Clark, Carl Andre, Sol Le Witt and Keith Sonnier in a raw, junk-filled space. On nearby Pier 14, Philip Glass performed and the year-old avant-garde theater company Mabou Mines staged a Samuel Beckett play. The artist Tina Girouard, who would cook at FOOD during its nearly three-year run, helped out with the hog. "The pig burnt on the outside," she recalled, "and raw on the inside."

Hyperallergic
August 18 2012

HYPERALLERGIC

112 Greene Street: The Soho that Used to Be

"It is rather inspiring," writes Peter Schjeldahl in the New York Times, "that in an hour of political crisis this art (despite its makers' eschewal of revolutionary postures) has arisen to make possible a project like 112 Greene Street." The year is 1970. The place is Soho, until recently known as the South Houston Industrial District. Here an unemployed artist can buy a six-story cast-iron ex-rag-picking warehouse, and huge chunks of sheet-zinc cornice can lie abandoned on the sidewalk at a demolition site until another artist bribes the garbage men to drive them to his studio. Sculptor Jeffrey Lew owns the six-story building at 112 Greene Street, where the eponymous exhibition space and workshop is taking shape. Alan Saret, who lives a block away, has joined in to get the gallery (extremely loosely) organized, and it is here that his piece "Cornicing," slung from the ceiling, becomes the sort of art that inspires the young critic.

Installation view of "112 Greene Street: The Early Years (1970–1974)" at David Zwirner Gallery, January 2011

Saret tells the story of the cornices in 112 Greene Street: The Early Years, 1970–1974, edited by Jessamyn Fiore. Half oral history and half exhibition catalogue, Fiore's book follows a show she curated last winter at David Zwirner, which prominently featured 112's celebrated alumnus, Gordon Matta-Clark (1943–1978), along with Saret, Richard Nonas, **Tina Girouard,** Suzanne Harris, Jene Highstein, Larry Miller, and Richard Serra. The show is lushly documented in the book. In addition, Fiore has interviewed nineteen artists, including Lew and all of the living exhibition participants but Serra, weaving their reminiscences into an episodic narrative. Fiore comes by her interest organically; she ran a nonprofit space, Thisisnotashop, in Dublin. Moreover, her parents, filmmakers Jane Crawford and Robert Fiore, belonged to the 112 circle, Crawford by way of her first marriage, to Matta-Clark. Fiore has an insider's feel for her subject, and her book is an evocative addition to the archive on downtown scenes — especially since the comprehensive oral history 112 Workshop/112 Greene Street: History, Artists & Artwork (New York University Press, 1981), edited by Robyn Brentano and Mark Savitt, has long been out of print.

It's easy to see why oral history is the favored mode. These people did wild stuff some forty years in the past. A few got famous. A few, like Matta-Clark and Harris, died young, and have been posthumously canonized or not (Harris's oeuvre is ripe for reinvestigation). Some left New York decades ago, and some live in the same lofts they renovated under the 1971 artist-in-residence law. Almost all continue to make art, and they remain bracingly nonrevisionist about their shared experience. Their voices nuance a still-evolving historiography, just as their sculptures, films, and performances helped to define post-Minimal and post-Conceptual practice. Nevertheless, part of what fascinates about 112 Greene Street, and sister endeavors like FOOD restaurant and the collective The Natural History of the American Dancer (both discussed by Fiore's interviewees), is the sense that no single interpretive strategy, not even that of first-person witness, totally explains how it all happened. It's a synergy of flukes that makes and breaks utopia.

Consider, for starters, the almost unimaginable ubiquity of big, cheap spaces, and lackadaisical police and buildings-department oversight, in what was already the most important art city in the world. Art-markets hadn't yet learned how to sell what the emerging sculptors, dancers, musicians, and photographers were producing. Lew lined up a couple backers for 112, from whom he demanded lump sums and strict noninterference; Carol Goodden founded FOOD with her modest inheritance. The real currency, however, was collaborative experiment. "I have an anarchistic nature," Lew declares. "I'm an anarchistic phenomenon." Other blithely anarchistic institution-builders created Avalanche magazine, the Performing Garage, The Kitchen, Mabou Mines, the Grand Union, the Poetry Project, Artists Space, and the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, shortly to become P.S.1. This DIY economy of scale guaranteed that people with skills and tools would be on hand to pitch in when one needed them, and enthusiastic audiences would turn up day after day, night after night. Borrowing an ethos from the counterculture yet jettisoning radical political objectives, the downtown artists could feel confident that they were furthering societal transformation while allowing themselves rambunctious aesthetic freedom; as Schjeldahl's comments demonstrate in passing, revolution was not their aim, but it wasn't not on their minds. Mary Heilmann tells Fiore, "Most of us came to 112 as bohemian outsiders and almost Marxists — against capitalist culture." Bill Beckley puts it this way: "We were all friends then. Some of us were male, some female, some hetero, some gay, some both, or all three, but that wasn't the issue. The issue was art […] We were negating much about modernist aesthetics, but at the same time we believed that what we were doing was new, and that there was still a possibility of the new."

112 Greene Street: The Early Years is rife with era-defining anecdotes. Everyone involved, for instance, remembers George Trakas's "The Piece that Went Through the Floor" (1970), a timber-and-glass structure that punched through from the rough street-level gallery to the even-rougher basement. Lew "freaked out," Trakas reports cheerfully, but the fact that, at 112, one could carve up the very architecture set the tone. 112 was the place where Matta-Clark — soon to become, himself, building-cutter extraordinaire — planted a flowering sapling under grow-lights in the basement ("Cherry Tree," 1971). Alice Aycock brought in thousands of pounds of sand, to be randomly sculpted by industrial fans she'd scavenged on Canal Street ("Sand/Fans," 1971), and Harris and Rachel Wood made dances by bouncing off huge sheets of rubber stretched between the Corinthian columns that gave the ratty space its elegant profile ("Rubber Thoughts on the Way to Florida in January," 1971).

Vito Acconci locked himself in a tiny room with a fighting cock ("Combination," 1971), which escaped, and had to be trapped by **Girouard** — whose own piece "Four Stages" (1972) was used as a frame for Mabou Mines performances. It was in the basement, likewise, that Leo Castelli, in sports-coat and loafers, was detained as a "hostage" during the performance "Prisoner's Dilemma" (1974), an experiment with live-feed, multi-channel video that was masterminded by Serra and Robert Bell, with Spalding Gray and G.H. Hovagimyan playing hooligans pitted against each other by the cops.

Eventually 112 got stable funding, and evolved into a normal exhibition space. (White Columns, in Chelsea, is its lineal descendent.) The Greene Street building enjoyed another life in the eighties and nineties as a recording studio, first operated by members of the Philip Glass Ensemble — who had belonged to the coterie from the beginning — and later serving artists from Public Enemy to Sonic Youth. Fiore concentrates, however, on the intense first phase. Was it really anarcho-Marxist? Sort of. Was the art-world transformed by it? Subtly, and not in exclusively anti-careerist ways. "We actually made galleries stronger than they ever were — precisely because we were doing the kind of things that people didn't necessarily understand," muses Acconci. "We formed the 80s without realizing it." Personal fallout was dramatic too. Wood, a dancer and a key figure at FOOD, moved to Vermont in 1976:

"I left New York because the very people I cared about were on a "death path," you know? Because the way they were living was so extreme and it seemed like they had disregard for their own lives. They were going to die, and I didn't want to stick around for it. And then Suzi died, Gordon died. There was a feeling during this time that it just couldn't go on forever. And we really had had such a rich and full experience."

No utopia, after all, holds out forever against assimilation and crack-up. But is the story of its "rich and full" early years enticing, urban-mythical? Inescapably. 112 "was just a room, a big room where anything could happen," Highstein says to Fiore. "It was a time when artists believed that every new work was going to change the world. We actually believed the works we were putting up had the power to change everything — that everything was being reinvented. It sounds really strange today, but we really believed it."

Pelican Bomb
September 7 2011

PELICAN BOMB

Anything but Decorative: Robert Gordy and Tina Girouard

BY BENJAMIN MORRIS

TINA GIROUARD, ANIMALS, B, 1984. SILKSCREEN ON COTTON. COURTESY THE ARTIST.

To fully apprehend "Patterns and Prototypes," the exhibition of works by Robert Gordy and Tina Girouard on view at the Contemporary Arts Center, an old schoolyard game is surprisingly useful. Take a word—any word will do but a personal favorite works best—and repeat it over and over until it begins to lose its sense, the sheer act of its repetition gradually untethering it from its referent in the mind. Continue to utter it until it has lost all meaning whatsoever and has become a mere sound. The effect is jarring: words floating free of their concepts, sounds hovering aimlessly above the objects with which they once danced.

Jarring, yes, but instructive. By inviting us to reconsider the relationship between words, sounds, structures, and concepts, this little game offers a readily available opportunity both to approach certain boundaries of understanding and to return from them, once the dust has cleared and the word for “table” has finally, after an hour or so, regained its legs. These boundaries make a startling appearance in “Patterns and Prototypes,” explored in diverse and striking ways by both of the artists on view.

The show, occasioned by the 35th anniversary of the CAC, aims to honor Gordy and Girouard's involvement in the early development of the Center in the 1970s and ’80s. Presenting about two dozen works by each artist during roughly that time period (Gordy from 1963-1985 and Girouard from 1971-1989), it provides a snapshot of each of the artists' work during a critical moment not just for his or her own development but also for the Pattern and Decoration movement, of which they were both a part. Rejecting both Minimalism’s austerity and the reigning modernist proscription of all things “decorative,” the movement's leading figures—Robert Kushner, Valerie Jaudon, Joyce Kozloff, and Miriam Schapiro—were largely based in New York and California, with their activity reaching its crescendo in the late ’70s and early ’80s. (Girouard had moved to New York from Louisiana in the 1960s, while Gordy worked in New Orleans for much of his life until his untimely death in 1986.)

If texture serves as a gateway to sensuality, and sensuality the invitation to feel the body, then Girouard's work offers a powerful contrast. In Gordy's most challenging works, the canvas implies a landscape of endless forms, a proto-erotic arcadia populated by infinitely many armless humanoids or scarlet-tipped hounds. For Girouard, however, the edge of the canvas is less a voyeur’s window than it is a mirror, in which the viewer must confront his or her own political and social identity. She incorporates softer lines and textures, muted colors, the use of stenciled figures, and a private language of symbols and archetypes that over time becomes a form of provocation. Featuring such diverse materials as cloth, rags, strips of wallpaper, beads, sequins, and worked steel, her textures liberate the patterns she explores from the tyranny of the two-dimensional space, and extend those explorations into arenas ungoverned by mathematics or computation. Her work from this era is grounded in political and social awareness, with the subject matter ranging from the AIDS epidemic to space exploration to domesticity and gender roles. Girouard has claimed in an interview that the word “decoration” rarely emerged within the movement itself; the artists of the time thought of themselves as being interested chiefly in patterning. “We were all activists,” she said. “We were just expressing our ideas and our beliefs with whatever materials we could.”

Hence the works on display in the center of the gallery—Conflicting Evidence, 1980—which rework their fabrics into the form of flags. While the large-scale works such as OK, I Hope, 1984; Road Kill, 1984; and Fast Work, 1988, are undoubtedly overwhelming, her smaller, more modest silkscreens, such as Clear, Monument, Fiery Gift, Moon Mother, Tee Pee with Spirits, 1980, offer important insights into the nature of her exploration. In a piece hanging at the entrance to the show, Pictionary, No. 9, 1979, Girouard outlines a private visual language in which she works—a glyph-like code, partly inspired by the code of International Symbols. This language emerged, she has said, in response to the imposition of meaning from outside sources: a resistance to a false sense of nostalgia for “simpler times” that her early viewers and critics frequently assumed, and that she never intended for any of her work. Such a private grammar can usefully control meaning; it can also, however, expand it. For in pieces such as Clear, Monument... Girouard is subtly training the eye to see through the canvas, and thus to see around it: back into those domestic, social, and political contexts, the spaces where injustices, inequalities, and transgressions perpetuate themselves.

Self-imposed constraints have occupied aesthetic movements as diverse as the Martian poets of the 1970s led by Craig Raine, and the Oulipo writers of the 1960s onward. Constraints can challenge writers and artists, readers and viewers to reconsider their notions of artistic engagement. Crossovers between forms, materials, and genres are not uncommon; Ezra Pound's poetry inspired by Chinese pictograms is as much a continuation of a tradition as Xu Bing's contemporary landscape canvases inspired by the same.

The opportunities for such engagement are fertile, and like the works in “Patterns and Prototypes,” limitless. Contrary to their label, however, Gordy and Girouard’s works are anything but decorative: they engage the viewer in profound and electrifying ways, they invoke a time period of national uncertainty (the space race had been won, but the arms race remained a standoff), and in their harnessing of this nervous energy they offer important implications for the viewer courageous enough to entertain the notion that the limit of understanding in any domain is the first one worth exploring. This includes our many apprehending selves, themselves infinite in nature: as cognitive beings, as embodied beings, and as political beings. To wit: the thought experiment noted above that recreates that sense of exploration may not be necessary to appreciate the show, but for those who are game to try it, it works best with one's own name.

“Patterns and Prototypes” on view through September 25, 2011 at the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans.

The Advocate
August 2011

THE ADVOCATE

Review: Patterns and Prototypes at CAC

D. Eric Bookhardt

Longtime curator and Prospect New Orleans founder Dan Cameron has a knack for putting art in context, and this Tina Girouard and Robert Gordy expo at the Contemporary Arts Center is right on the money. Both artists helped shape the direction of American art, yet both became overshadowed. In the late 1960s, Girouard and fellow Louisianians Lynda Benglis, Dickie Landry and Keith Sonnier, helped to launch post-minimalism in New York as a way of injecting sinuous, fluid lines into minimalism's stark rigidity. She and New Orleans native Kendall Shaw also were seminal influences on the Pattern and Design, or P&D, movement in New York in the early 1970s. But one of the greatest P&D painters of all, Robert Gordy, remained in New Orleans until his death at age 52 in 1986. Blending deco patterning with expressionistic and psychedelic flourishes, Gordy produced some of America's more charismatic paintings and prints of the period, and this show provides a welcome window on his and Girouard's accomplishments.

Girouard replaced minimalism's hard edges with soft sinewy fabric and symbolic content as we see in her large Conflicting Evidence tapestry. A seasoned performance artist, she also collaborated with Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass and many others who were part and parcel of her exotically patterned life. Many of her and Gordy's works look timeless and vital today while reminding us of Louisiana's major, yet often overlooked, influence on modern American art history.

Arqpress
2011

“Tina Girouard recalled how “‘‘Each person had his own area of interest. I was interested in the idea of psychological scale in architecture […] The idea of the crossroads interested Richard Nonas and Jene Highstein – where streets met, what hallways do. Their interest in entranceways of buildings influenced me – wanting to stop people who were just passing through. Dicky Landry and Suzie Harris dealt with the acoustics of space. Suzie was teaching sensory awareness, and both of them would try to diagnose the basic sound that any room makes.’”

Arqpress

The field and the table: Rosalind Krauss’s ‘expanded field’ and the *Anarchitecture* group

The *Anarchitecture* group emerged in the early 1970s in New York. Although it has become somewhat synonymous with the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, it had a broad membership of equally significant artists, including Laurie Anderson, Tina Girouard, Carol Goodden, Suzanne Harris, Jene Highstein, Bernard Kirschenbaun, Richard Landry and Richard Nonas among others.[1] Philip Ursprung’s recent catalogue essay sets out some of the complexities that accompany any attempt to understand the group’s internal dynamic, and the problematic conflation of its collective activities to the work, or at least to the ideas, of Matta-Clark.[2]

While mindful of Ursprung’s various qualifications – and despite Mark Wigley’s wry observation to the effect that with increasing *Anarchitectural* evidence comes greater difficulty in understanding the group’s interrelationships[3] – it is seemingly a relatively straightforward art-historical task to situate *Anarchitecture* within the New York arts scene of the 1970s, particularly within the artistic community of SoHo, or more particularly still within the developments that took place in Greene Street or in the collective *Food* restaurant.[4] It is also relatively straightforward to demonstrate architecture’s thoroughgoing role in the group’s interests, working processes and collective output. Tina Girouard recalled how:

> *Each person had his own area of interest. I was interested in the idea of psychological scale in architecture* […] *The idea of the crossroads interested Richard* [Nonas] *and Jene* [Highstein] *– where streets met, what hallways do. Their interest in entranceways of buildings influenced me – wanting to stop people who were just passing through. Dicky* [Landry] *and Suzie* [Harris] *dealt with the acoustics of space. Suzie was teaching sensory awareness, and both of them would try to diagnose the basic sound that any room makes.*[5]

And it is also fairly straightforward to trace the return of such architectural adventures back into the careers of each particular artist within the group.

Leaving these observations to one side, I want to explore aspects of the ongoing difficulties that can still be felt when attempting to account for their contribution to the field of architecture more broadly. Manoeuvring through the accepted ‘facts’ about *Anarchitecture*, it is less clear what they *did* as a group: there was no clearly articulated collective goal for *Anarchitecture* beyond its role as a forum for individual artists to explore ideas and issues. According to Tina Girouard, ‘We would sit around tables at restaurants and bars throwing out ideas’. Although this was a throwaway remark, *Anarchitecture* can be pulled back to a number of tables that I would like to discuss here as a means of throwing out a few ideas about what *Anarchitecture* might give back to architecture (beyond the ‘anti-’). Reading their modus operandi alongside the more explicit, roughly contemporaneous, and far better known art-historical method of Rosalind Krauss’s ‘expanded field’, this article will introduce *Anarchitecture*’s own catalogue of work, and compare their approach to setting out a field for architecture with Krauss’s broader project.

It will go on to compare these with other accepted fields and related processes that set out to delimit the education and practice of an architect, such as the well-known account offered by Vitruvius, or the more recent prescription of professional and regulatory bodies such as the RIBA and ARB.[6] It will suggest that the implications of *Anarchitecture*’s ‘field’ not only expose aspects of traditional architectural operations that are not usually revealed to the uninitiated, but that they also raise questions regarding the authority of the discipline itself and the ways in which it expects its products to be received and judged.

First tables: the invite and Krauss-Klein

Anarchitecture had one exhibition at 112 Greene Street, New York City, which ran between 9 and 22 March 1974, and which was subsequently published in *Flash Art* in June of that year. According to one of the group’s members, Richard Nonas, ‘[t]he *Anarchitecture* show was totally dull, the promise of *Anarchitecture* never happened’.[7]

I will discuss this totally dull show in the next section. Here, it is worth making a few introductory remarks about the *Anarchitecture* group by dwelling on the invitation to that show *[1]*. It is our first

Saret, Richard Serra, and Rachel Wood. This somewhat awkward foregrounding of a single—albeit brilliant—denizen of 112 shifted in Smyth's show, which presented one or two pieces each by Alice Aycock, Joan Jonas, Dennis Oppenheim, Smyth himself, and others.

Fiore's show was more expansive, and perhaps truer to the spirit of the place. It was also, perforce, more elusive. Girouard's four-panel canopy of flowered fabrics, Air Space Stage, 1972, and matching floor-work, Lie-No, 1973, consisting of four lengths of flowered linoleum, begged to be activated by live bodies, though it wasn't clear how. Saret's Four Piece Folding Glade, 1970, a quartet of tall wire bundles, seemed inconsequential propped in a corner, though the industrial-garden motif rhymed with rough-hewn components in Nonas's serial array Blocks of Wood (Light to Dark, Dark to Light), 1970, as well as with Matta-Clark's pulsatile "Energy Tree" drawings, 1970–74. It wasn't that Fiore's installation should have pushed these connections; the missing link was not formal relationship but an experiential urgency that has dissipated like perfume. Thus the most telling part of "The Early Years"—though not the best looking—was film and video. Matta-Clark's Open House, 1972—a film documenting a slapstick dance in a Dumpster parked on Greene Street that he had fitted with partitions and doors—made particular sense juxtaposed against Wood's films of performances by the improvisatory group the Natural History of the American Dancer. (In the same vein, one missed the video—a collaboration with Juan Downey—that accompanies Matta-Clark's Fresh Air Cart, 1972. The two-seat contraption with umbrella and oxygen tank was on display, but Matta-Clark did not conceive it as static sculpture; it was a street-performance prop.) Other rare film footage captured Harris's Wheels/Flying Machine, 1973, exuberant, equipment-based dances utilizing giant gears and aerial harnesses. Serra's video Prisoner's Dilemma, 1974—in which an amused yet wary Leo Castelli (Serra's dealer) is the guest in a mock game show masterminded by Serra himself—hints at 112's role in the tight-knit art world of the era. It was gallery as antigallery.

Smyth's show was more serious, and more normal. Mostly large-scale sculpture leavened with a few paintings, plus photos of and sketches for performances, it demonstrated how welcoming 112 was to women, with big works by Aycock, Jonas, Mary Heilmann, Susan Rothenberg, and Jackie Winsor, along with smaller contributions by Louise Bourgeois and Carolee Schneemann (both of whom showed there once, in 1974 and 1977, respectively). Smyth also included as a kind of centerpiece a strong revision of George Trakas's 1970 installation The Piece that Went Through the Floor. Documentary photographs show how this construction of heavy beams extended through the floor into the basement at 112. At Salomon, Trakas reconceived it as Through the Looking Glass: The Piece that Went Through the Ceiling, 2011. The timber platform was topped with mirrors angled at the gallery's windows, so that a viewer gazing up saw snowy ground five stories below reflected, floating. Once upon a time, say 112 alumni, such witty perceptual surprises were ubiquitous. That's a difficult vibe to historicize. But the 112 experiment remains potent in part because it was never meant to join the canon.

DAVID ZWIRNER/SALOMON CONTEMPORARY

Artforum
January 2011

ARTFORUM

REVIEWS NEW YORK

“112 Greene Street: The Early Years (1970–1974)”

David Zwirner/Salomon Contemporary

Gordon Matta-Clark, Open House, 1972, still from a film in 16 mm transferred to DVD, 41 minutes. From “112 Greene Street: The Early Years (1970–1974).

112 Greene Street helped catalyze SoHo in the 1970s. The artist-run gallery occupied a building owned by Jeffrey Lew, with Gordon Matta-Clark as resident imp and impresario; artists and dancers working there comprised a friendship circle that was also a post-Minimal Who’s Who. Like that of any legend, the history of this wild incubator—where site-specific, collaborative artmaking bloomed—poses curatorial problems now. Whose memories get sanctioned? How can re-created objects, archived ephemera, and grainy video in commercial white cubes capture what participants loved: no-holds-barred play?

Two shows, separately conceived, told parallel versions of the story. Both were inside jobs. “112 Greene Street: A Nexus of Ideas in the Early ’70s,” at Salomon, was curated by Ned Smyth, who joined the party in 1971 when Keith Sonnier and Dickie Landry picked him up hitchhiking. “112 Greene Street: The Early Years (1970–1974),” at Zwirner, was organized by Jessamyn Fiore, whose mother, Jane Crawford, was married to Matta-Clark. Together, the exhibitions showcased nineteen artists, without overlap. Fiore’s project was framed as a Matta-Clark exhibition “with” works by Tina Girouard, Jene Highstein, Larry Miller, Richard Nonas, Alan

Saret, Richard Serra, and Rachel Wood. This somewhat awkward foregrounding of a single—albeit brilliant—denizen of 112 shifted in Smyth's show, which presented one or two pieces each by Alice Aycock, Joan Jonas, Dennis Oppenheim, Smyth himself, and others.

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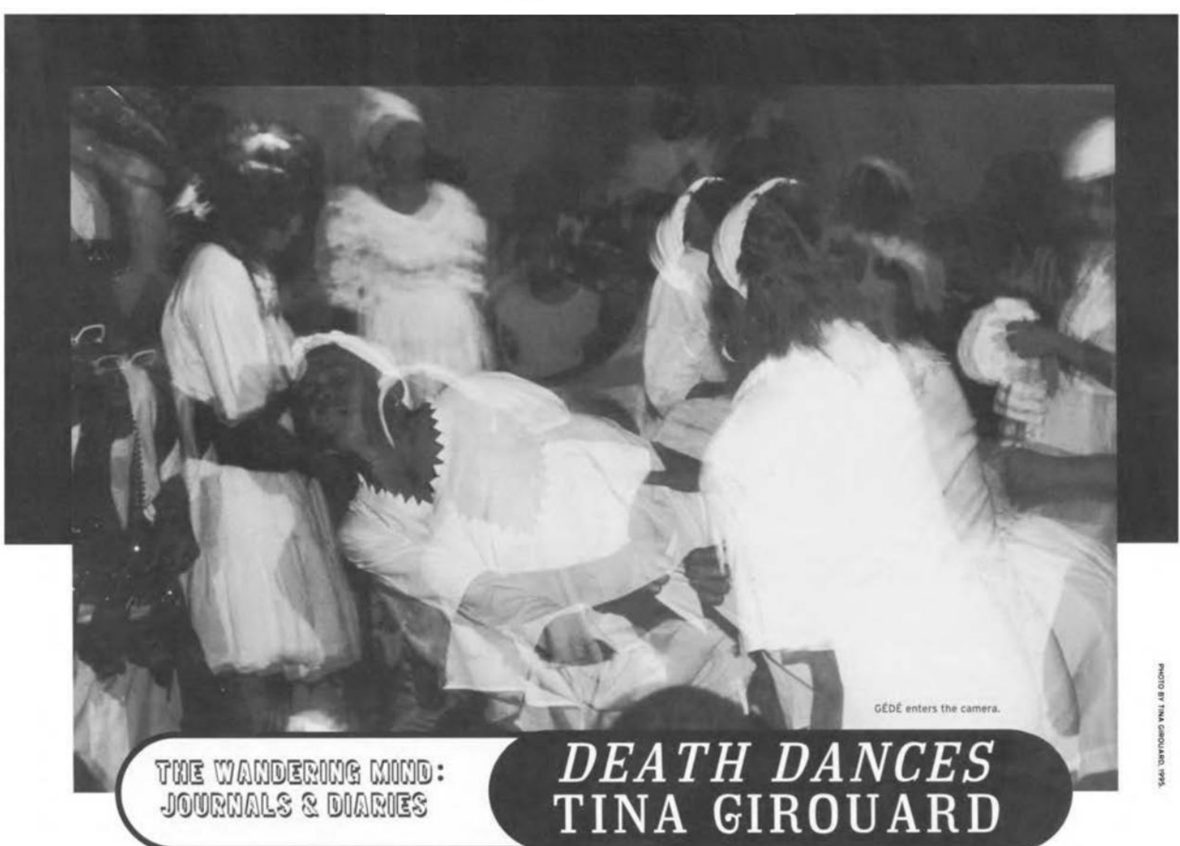
DAVID ZWIRNER/SALOMON CONTEMPORARY

BOMB
April 1996

BOMB



GÉDÉ enters the camera.

PHOTO BY TINA GIROUARD, 1995.

THE WANDERING MIND: JOURNALS & DIARIES

DEATH DANCES

TINA GIROUARD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI 1994

Off the Rue Macajoux in Bel Air, a labyrinth of footpaths meanders through a maze-like tangle of hovels. Once a hilly forest of homes and gardens that overlooked Port-au-Prince and the vast, horseshoe bay of La Gonave, Bel Air is one of Port-au-Prince's worst slums – solid walls of shotgun style dwellings without even an alley between them. At crossroads, the corridors widen to mini-plazas where cooking, washing, laundry, bathing and social gatherings occur. In 1918, the St. Louis family moved to Bel Air, and after becoming a Vodou priest around 1920, Ceus "Tibout" St. Louis built his temple in 1946. Always filled with elders and children – a combination home for the aged and day care center – the turquoise and orange temple bears the scars of broken walls, leaky ceiling and a cement hard, packed-earth floor that testifies to 50 years use as a Vodou family house and site of thousands of Vodou rituals and celebrations. Today, a big healthy black goat with a purple satin sash around its horns is tied by the altar.

Societe Lececoule Jour Malonge, the name of the St. Louis Vodou family/society translates from Kreyol to mean "people who go with the flow live longer." I became friends with Tibout while interviewing him about the origins of Haiti's sequin arts. Our mutual respect grew over time, and after being pressured to initiate into the Vodou society, Tibout finally pronounced me a "Mambo of Art" – telling the rest of the family that I was already one of his "Fey" (leaf) on the tree of the society. After his death, his widow Carmen became the leader of the temple, and honored me by asking that I become "President," the one who raises money for the three major ceremonies that must be performed annually to keep the temple a legitimate home for the Lwa[1] (saints or spirits).

The first GÉDÉ I sponsored was for Tibout, in 1994, after his death at 92. Today's ceremony is dedicated to Allison Miner, a founder of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage festival. She brought music, dance and merriment to millions, and was now fighting cancer and due to undergo a bone marrow transplant in November – GÉDÉ month. On leaving New Orleans for Haiti, I asked Allison to give me something very close to her to take along for the ritual. She handed me a porcelain statuette of the only American Indian saint, St. Catherine Tekakwitha. Looking around, I spotted some socks on the floor. Allison laughed at the literalness of an object "close to you," and allowed me to wrap the statue in the socks as her essence to be delivered to GÉDÉ.

Vodou ceremonies have been evolving for hundreds of years. In the Caribbean island of Haiti the liturgy, dance, song, persuasive drum rhythms, and the art, architecture, costume and decor of Vodou temples are ingrained in the consciousness from infancy to old age. The finesse of an experienced Vodouist is to maintain a balance between uncontrolled possession and open communication between the spirit apparition and all present, an equilibrium between personal control and abandon (uncontrolled possession resembles a seizure). Mambos and Houngans are most adept at walking the tightrope between physical and metaphysical worlds – they see and live in both worlds, performing spiritual and aesthetic feats. So natural and essential is the performance that it compares to a virtuoso jazz concert. Vodou celebrants spontaneously improvise seemingly wild departures without ever abandoning the baseline of the ritual performance.

From last year's GÉDÉ ceremony for Tibout, I know the goat has been ritually preened for seven days and will be sacrificed. A few will partake of blood from the testicles for ancestral procreation. A Houngan will then go around the temple making the

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Art in America

Report from New Orleans

You Can Go Home Again: Five From Louisiana

BY LUCY R. LIPPARD

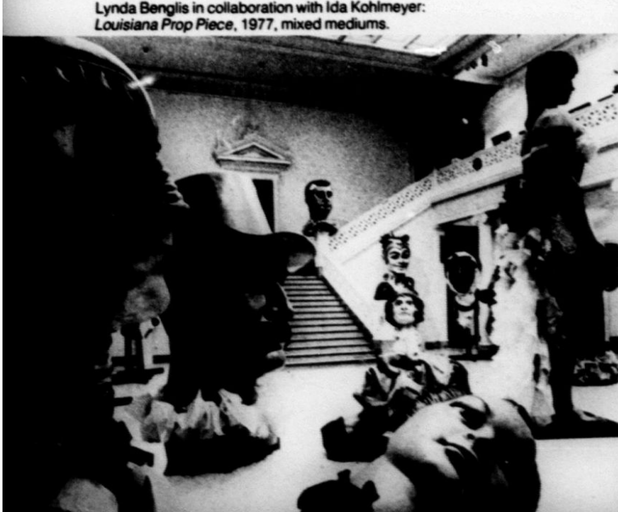
Lynda Benglis, Tina Girouard, Richard Landry, Robert Rauschenberg and Keith Sonnier were all born and/or raised in Louisiana, and this show, organized by William Fagaly at the New Orleans Museum of Art, was a festive homecoming as well as an esthetic event. New Orleans art critic Luba Glade saw it as a "loud 'Yes' to the ever-present question of whether creative people from the land of magnolias, red beans and gumbo can make it to center stage in the great big art world out there," while *Vogue* burbled that the "Cajun Crowd" or the "Bayou Bunch" were the life of the art-world party. Indeed, at the opening there were flambeau carriers twirling torches in the night and a good old-fashioned dancing party with a Cajun band afterwards. The artists' families and imported friends added to the spirit of triumphant return (to which I was particularly susceptible, I guess, since I too lived part of my childhood in Louisiana).

In addition to the large room each artist had for his or her art, everybody except Rauschenberg had something else going on as well. Benglis collaborated with her former art teacher at Newcomb College, Ida Kohlmeyer (one of New Orleans' better known abstract painters), in an "environmental sculpture" which practically stole the show. They filled the museum's high-ceilinged entrance room and stairway with giant papier-mâché heads from Mardi Gras floats, some of them grotesque caricatures of famous figures whose raw necks they trimmed with bright tissue-paper ties and collars. A few days before the opening, Girouard and three others performed her opulent, relaxed, colorful piece called *Pinwheel*, which was preserved in the exhibition as a color videotape and a cloth canopy sculpture. A circular ground ritually created from "Solomon's Lot" (eight lengths of patterned silk left in her mother-in-law's attic by a salesman relative) was the quartered arena for *Pinwheel*'s series of allegorical activities involving the categories of male and female; the four directions; past, present and future; different speeds; the elements; red, green, black and white; and animal, vegetable, mineral, along with a technological, abstract "other" performed by the artist and representing "disembodied control." The piece related to Girouard's *Costumed Portrait* series; to her concern with role-playing, transformation, and their relationship to place; and to her interest in food as art—and as adjunct to art and life. Landry gave a "Quadraphonic Sound Delay" concert, described as a "vortex of sound circling" the performance space. Sonnier had a double room with one of his "long distance" sound pieces operating in it; his films were shown, and a changing video program with work by all the artists also ran each day.

If there's a common sensibility among the artists in "Five from Louisiana," it has something to do with life style, plus a certain flamboyance with the use of multi-media, of performance, of color, of light and fabric.

After all this, the art objects, clearly

Author: Lucy R. Lippard is an art critic and former Louisianian. Her most recent book is a monograph on Eva Hesse (N.Y.U. Press).



Lynda Benglis in collaboration with Ida Kohlmeyer: *Louisiana Prop Piece*, 1977, mixed mediums.

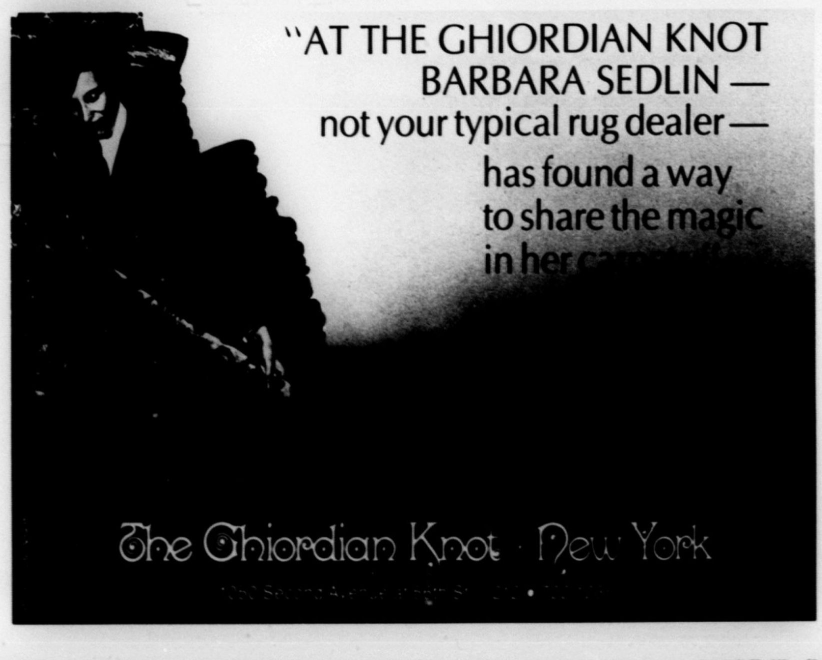
Tina Girouard: *Pinwheel*, performed by Girouard, Mercedes Deshotel, John Geldersma and Gerard Murrell.

and airily installed, seemed very much museum pieces. Sonnier had made especially for the space a neon diptych which was just plain beautiful; its reversals and contrasts of light/dark, transparent/opaque, up/down, soft/hard (all achieved with just glass, black paint and neon bands) proved that he remains one of the very few artists working with light who can come up with results that are emotionally and esthetically satisfying rather than merely spectacular. Rauschenberg showed several pieces from the sensuous and luxurious *Hoarfrost* series, and two large combines—one, *Opal Reunion*, made especially for the show. It included reflective surfaces, a winged disc, an oar, a spider web and other images associated, I gather, with his home state.

Landry's contribution brought all of his work together for the first time: music, video and what he called "Video Facets"—drawing/photographs which incorporated all the permutational and perceptual concerns in his use of the other mediums. His major visual piece was a huge photo-grid of hands performing a 1969 clapping piece called *1,2,3,4*; you can almost hear it while you look. ("When I was studying the flute, or clarinet, or saxophone," Landry told Philip Glass in the catalogue, "the teachers would say, 'Stand in front of the mirror and look at your hands, or look at your lips, because that's how you correct yourself! If there are mistakes, you can see them.' ") Girouard showed colorful, direct stencil prints (she recently exhibited them at Holly Solomon), as well as the *Pinwheel* canopy sculpture that was my favorite. Benglis' room soared with two series of "knots," which I have never seen look as good as they did here, in a somewhat warmer space then usual, spotlighted, with the labels way down near the floor so the whole wall was free for the pieces to move in. The copper series, titled *7 Come 11*, quite outshone the cast aluminum one, making the latter seem somewhat leaden. Metallized over screening, cotton bunting and plaster, the copper knots retain a grainy surface that catches the light. The eleven forms simply took off in a virtuosic performance, each seeming to have a separate "personality" but working together like a highly disciplined dance troupe.

The exhibition's catalogue came in the form of a newsprint rotogravure supplement to the Sunday New Orleans *Times Picayune*, which has an estimated readership of almost a million, and it was sold at the museum for a dime—surely one of the great bargains of all time. It included reproductions of the works and interviews or brief essays on each artist (among them an uncharacteristically vapid Tennessee Williams on Benglis). In Sonnier's interview, Calvin Harlan, mentor and teacher at the University of Southern Louisiana (which Sonnier, Girouard and Landry attended), said that his Cajun students were the most interesting he'd had: "You had a Southern upbringing but with a difference; yours is a region within a region. You all had humor and a lot of confidence. . . . The Cajuns have an unbelievable amount of sensitivity and skill in the kitchen, on the farm, in the dance halls, but very little visual culture to speak of. However, once that artistic tendency is tapped, the results are amazing . . . what I call the 'Louis XIV touch'—you know what I mean: the 'Grand Manner.' From the very beginning you seem to have had this ability to take almost anything lying around and transform it effortlessly into something worth looking at."

Although Benglis and Rauschenberg are not Cajuns, this is as good a place as any to locate what does seem to be a common sensibility among the five. I realized in the back of my mind that it had something to do with life style, a certain flamboyance, with the use of multi-media, of performance, color, light and fabric. Maybe, as Girouard says of her own piece, it is "somehow connected with Mardi Gras, where people masquerade." In any case, all these artists are able to use their own pasts and those of others without self-conscious nostalgia and with high esthetic spirits. □



JULY/AUGUST 1977 25

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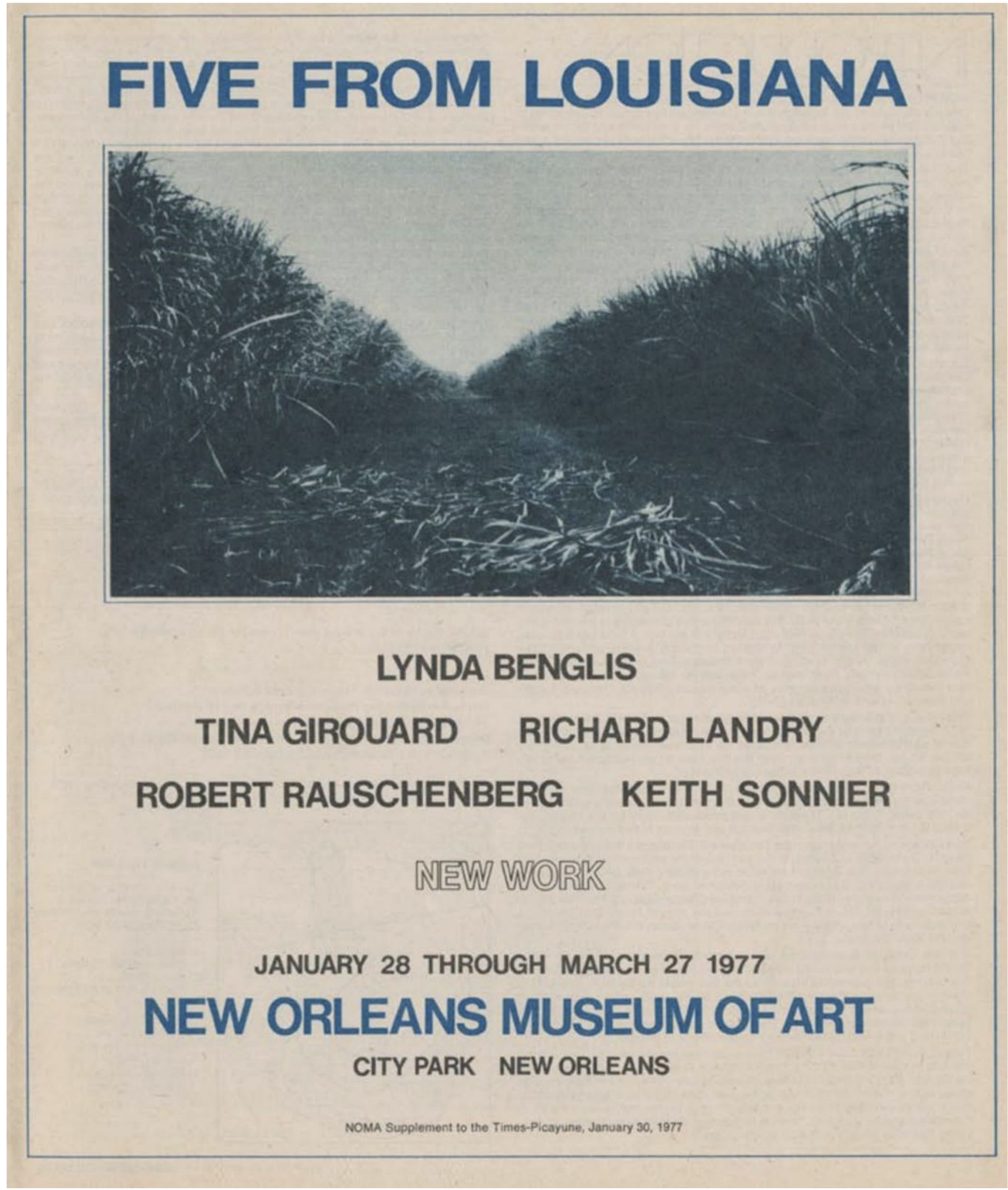
The Times Picayune
January 1977

The Times-Picayune


FIVE FROM LOUISIANA

LYNDA BENGLIS
TINA GIROUARD RICHARD LANDRY
ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG KEITH SONNIER

NEW WORK

JANUARY 28 THROUGH MARCH 27 1977
NEW ORLEANS MUSEUM OF ART
CITY PARK NEW ORLEANS

NOMA Supplement to the Times-Picayune, January 30, 1977

TINA GIROUARD

An Interview by LIZA BÉAR
At WBAI Radio Station, New York, Oct. 27, 1976

TWO TREES IN THE FOREST

PART I

I announce:

"This is Liza Bêar at WBAI, New York, with Radio WAVE, an artists' program. Tonight's guest is Tina Girouard. We're doing this show live with a Cajun audience: potter Mercedes Deshotel, sculptor John Geldersma, and photographer Gerard Murrell. We've brought some things with us to Studio A: a table cloth from Louisiana, six red apples, chutney, walnuts, grape juice, Wasser brot, crisp rye bread, Danish cheese, carrots, Merce's home-made bread, Tina's juke box, and a wilting spider plant. In the background you should be hearing...you *should* be hearing... you should be *hearing* a tape of barnyard clucking sounds recorded at Indian Bayou. It's unusually hectic here at BAI; there are people in all the adjoining studios; we're going to try to cool down and take it easy."

I've just returned from Toronto, Tina from Geneva. I'm conscious of place and transition, airplanes and congestion. I have very little voice. Tina's given me some notes on her piece *Swiss Self*, a solo performance at a Geneva gallery. I read out her list of props which I translate from French and then I formulate what I want to know....

Liza Béar: *When you go to other places to do works, do you feel a need to redefine yourself in terms of that place?*

Tina Girouard: Well, *Swiss Self* was a current self-portrait taking place in Geneva . . . I'm interested in reality and in making reality stronger, and one way of doing that is to bring things from the place into the piece.

LB: *How did you want to present yourself to the Swiss?*

TG: Well, as myself in their place. I used Swiss money because we think of Switzerland as the bank of the world. And a cowbell, because that's very special to Switzerland. The Swiss bell their cows for the Alps, and this bell was more like a church bell. It weighed about 15 pounds. I also used a scythe . . . I was staying in the country, and I got the bell and the scythe from the farmer down the road. They had something to do with me too . . . because they were from the farm.

LB: *Did you grow up in the country?*

TG: I grew up on a rice farm between De Quincy and Lake Charles, in the country, a place that has no name . . .

LB: *What did the performance consist of?*

TG: The only experience similar to it is a sand painting. I made a kind of effigy with the materials—there were also a lot of wild flowers, raffia, lengths of cotton from Louisiana, bamboo rugs, a washboard, a watch, a bar of chocolate—at the places where my head, my hands, my feet, and the erogenous zone (the other brain) would be. And then I laid myself out on it and sprinkled 10 kilos of Swiss money over the whole thing, as another layer of the pattern. I just lay there for a while. There was a video camera on the ceiling facing down, so the audience was also getting an overhead shot . . . The scythe was really important, because the portrait is a kind of life-death portrait.

LB: *Uhhuh . . . A lot of your work has been done with other artists. Could you say something about how that developed? I know we both came to New York on the same day, July 28, 1968.*

TG: Well, I'd come straight from undergraduate school in Lafayette, and within a couple of months of being in New York, I started working for other artists. I danced with Deborah Hay on and off for a year, and through her workshop I was introduced to thing. And during that first year I also got involved with the work of Keith Sonnier and Richard Serra. And of course, as I got a little more serious, I took a more active role . . . There's something about working with other people: you must spend some time in solitary concentration, and know who you are and what you have to do. But that can also narrow you down, and I'm always opened up by working with others.

particular collaborations? For instance, your Bridge-Proposal *with Barbara Dilley . . .*

TG: . . . what came from that? I think my whole idea of portraiture. This is two years after the fact, and I realize that, in a way, Barbara and I were trying to make portraits of each other. I was trying to do it visually and she was trying to do it with activity.

LB: *And did it work?*

TG: Did it work? Well, of course it did. It worked very definitely for both of us, for a couple of years. And it was a real kind of nurturing new experience. Our first performance, incidentally, was at USL . . . The last piece we did, we collectively got a group of sixteen people together. About half of them were professional, and half had never performed at all.

LB: *That was* Juxtaposed-Contained-Revealed *at The Kitchen, right?*

TG: Right. We presented psychological portraits or persona projections. I worked closely with each person to develop an image of them using costume that released or revealed an aspect of their persona that they hadn't been able to . . . that hadn't come out in their life yet. We used geographic associations, characters from movies, that sort of thing. I wanted them to be perfectly comfortable. I didn't want them to be coat-hangers. And Barbara gave them something to do, a role to play . . . In that work, everything that had to do with space, what the performers and the performance area looked like, those were all my decisions. What happened during the performance was Barbara's.

LB: *Have you ever gotten into a more active kind of dramatization?*

TG: Of course. Last year I did a piece called *Scenes* with four simultaneous scenes: *Work, Rest, War, Sport*. Certain elements like the timing were abstracted—we had a timing rehearsal—we called it a race. But each person had to develop his scene alone, for the scene to be really theirs. I can only give the simple reduced idea, and all the details, the camouflage has to come from them. If you try to choreograph someone's every move, it becomes a rehearsed piece, a theatrical piece, rather than an experience in its own right. And I want my performances to be experiences.

LB: *You don't think of them as improvisations though, do you.*

Costumed Portrait, 1974, Evelyn Jein Gi Lee Lai in the persona of *Black Knight*

Costumed Portrait, Terry D'Reilly as *Mayan Runner*

LIZA BEAR is President of the Center for New Art Activities, Inc., and is editor and producer of its contemporary art journal *Avalanche*, founded in 1970. Born in Casablanca, Morocco, Ms. Béar studied Honours Philosophy at Bedford College, University of London (1961-1965) and was co-editor of the London publication *Circuit Magazine* before moving to New York in 1968. She has interviewed numerous artists for *Avalanche*, including Carl Andre, Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Dennis Oppenheim, Barry Le Va, Philip Glass, Jackie Winsor, William Wegman, Chris Burden, Richard Serra, Vito Acconci, and Keith Sonnier. Ms. Béar, who has delivered numerous lectures and presentations throughout the U.S., is currently working on her own videotape *Fallacies* and a series of five programs for Public Television.

6 FIVE FROM LOUISIANA

"Theres something about working with other people, you must spend some time in solitary concentration, and know who you are what you have to do. But that can also narrow you down, and I'm always opened up by working with others." – Tina Girouard, *The Time Picayune*, 1977

ARTnews
February 1973

ARTnews

Tina Girouard presented four "architectural" pieces at the *112 Greene Street* gallery, designed to be activated by dance movement but effective on their own. Each "space-stage" piece proceeded from a different concept of material or location; "air" consisted of hanging sheets of printed cloth, "wall" of a careful arrangement of boards and slats leaning on the wall, "floor" of a series of pipes and planks hung at different heights, and "sound" of virtually invisible piano wire strung through the other pieces, as well as tapes of performances. All four sets were adjustable to the needs and desires of the various troupes that danced in them nearly every night of the show. Girouard's work is a logical and innovative step in the development of current art thinking and current dance thinking. Her preference for working with raw materials, arranged but not altered, immensely enhanced the pieces.

The desire to work with unrefined, "un-artistic" (or "pre-artistic") materials, allowing their natural properties to enrich the "artistic"

ARTnews February 1973

Vogue
January 1977

VOGUE

The Bayou Bunch

Not to be outdone by the regional pride of other states and cities claiming their own, the New Orleans Museum of Art has organized a really live show of five stylish native sons and daughters of Louisiana. The five —Robert Rauschenberg, Lynda Benglis, Richard Landry, Tina Girouard, and Keith Sonnier— are all newsmakers in New York; if they share anything, it is a droll wit, a talent for performance, and a totally unconventional attitude toward the boundaries between art and life —or, for that matter, art and anything else. In New York, the "Cajun crowd" is the life of the party; this month they are stirring things up back home with this New Orleans show of **Five from Louisiana,** which is on until March 27.—B.R.

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