



RICHARD PERRY/THE NEW YORK TIMES

By CAROL VOGEL

IN Tomás Saraceno's imagination his constellation of 16 joined modules under construction on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art will take off in a heavy puff of wind and float over Central Park. "The whole thing will go into orbit," Mr. Saraceno, the Argentine artist who made it, said on a recent foggy morning.

For the past 15 summers the Met's roof garden has been the setting for traditional sculptures by artists like Ellsworth Kelly, Jeff Koons and, last year, Anthony Caro. It has also been a place to walk up a winding bamboo pathway that soared some 50 feet in an untraditional installation that invited visitor participation. But perhaps the most unexpected environment of all is taking shape there now: a dizzying multipoly-

"Tomás Saraceno on the Roof: Cloud City" opens Tuesday at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

gonal habitat of reflective stainless steel and acrylic.

Called "Cloud City," it is the largest of Mr. Saraceno's 10-year-old series, "Cloud Cities/Air Port City." He was on the roof this week supervising a team of

about a dozen installers assembling his creation, which he described as "an international space station." As pieces began to be set in place, Mr. Saraceno sneaked a visitor inside and up a twisty staircase about 20 feet above the roof garden. Some of the floors were transparent, and the walls were mirrored steel, acrylic or open to the air. Suddenly buildings, people and trees were upside down or sideways, sometimes al-

most spinning around from the perspective inside this giant futuristic construction.

Like many of Mr. Saraceno's installations "Cloud City" is his vision of floating or flying cities — places that defy conventional notions of space, time and gravity. "You can have a feeling of weightlessness that's a bit disorient-

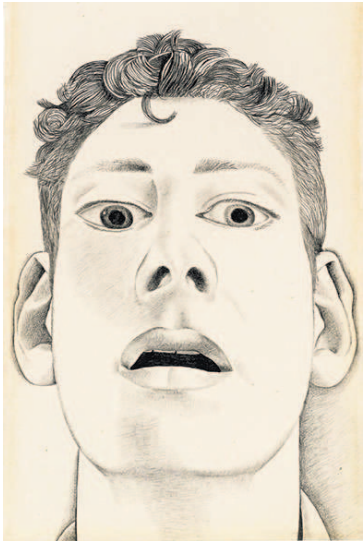
Continued on Page 30

A Painter Stripped Bare

According to many critics, Lucian Freud started making great paintings only after he let go of drawing: abandoning flat, crisply outlined figures for massively fleshy nudes nourished by a full brush. The quietly ravishing "Lucian Freud Drawings," at Acquavella Galleries, gives Freud's works on paper a chance to speak for themselves, beginning with his childhood sketches and ending with the last etching plate he touched.

What they tell us is that Freud (1922-2011) kept on drawing, and that, to the last, energy still

KAREN ROSENBERG
ART REVIEW



PRIVATE COLLECTION, LUCIAN FREUD ARCHIVE

Lucian Freud Drawings *The works on display at Acquavella Galleries, including the 1948 self-portrait below, span eight decades of this artist's life.*

flowed between his paintings and his works on paper.

The exhibition comes to Acquavella from Blain/Southern in London, where it accompanied a Freud retrospective at the National Portrait Gallery. It has been organized by William Feaver, the curator of Freud's retrospectives at Tate Britain (2002) and the Museo Correr in Venice (2005), who consulted closely with the artist until his death at 88 last July.

It includes some small oil portraits and powerful examples of Freud's work in etching (which isn't exactly drawing but is close enough to deserve our scrutiny here, some five years after the Museum of Modern Art's "Lucian Freud: The Painter's Etchings" established his mastery of the medium.)

"Lucian Freud Drawings" starts early, perhaps a little too early. The oldest work, "Birds in Tree," dates from about 1930 and was, as Mr. Feaver notes, exhibited in a 1938 show of "child art" at Peggy Guggenheim's London gallery.

More revealing than this precocious scribble of conté crayon, however, are bristly pen drawings from around 1940: twinned figures ("Two Boys Lying Down") and family members ("The Painter's Mother"). Here too are comparatively tender animal studies: dead birds and monkeys, living horses.

As is often remarked, Freud's portraits of the

Continued on Page 31



RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Schiaparelli and Prada: Impossible Conversations *A video of Miuccia Prada plays behind outfits she and Elsa Schiaparelli designed at this Costume Institute exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

Speaking of Fashion

The Metropolitan Museum of Art won't have to stay open till midnight to accommodate crowds for "Schiaparelli and Prada: Impossible Conversations," this year's Costume Institute extravaganza, mainly because the show isn't all that extravagant, certainly not on the order of the Alexander McQueen exhibition last year.

It's on the small side. It has a tight thesis, comparing and contrasting work by two designers of different generations. And it carries that idea through with the careful, even wonkish earnestness of an end-of-year term paper.

Still, that it takes its task seriously is refreshing; you don't always find this in fashion exhibition. And, with the designers under appraisal being Elsa Schiaparelli and Miuccia Prada, the

chosen subject is far from a dry one.

In the fashion field, as opposed to the field of fine art, women have always been, are even expected to be, alpha figures; protean creators, consequential personalities, imperious commanders of craftsmanly troops. These two designers certainly fill the bill.

Both were born in Italy, Schiaparelli (pronounced SKYAP-a-relli) in Rome in 1890, Ms. Prada in Milan in 1949. Both were from old, conservative families, and both went rogue early on. As a young woman Schiaparelli shocked her parents by writing sexy poems and taking a nanny job in London. Ms. Prada, a child of the 1960s, mounted the leftist political barriers with her peers.

Both came to fashion almost by accident, and

Continued on Page 26

INSIDE

ART REVIEW 28
Édouard Vuillard, from the avant-garde to the haut-bourgeois. Ken Johnson reviews.

BOOK REVIEW 25
Aliens in the womb and other strange tales from Anne Enright. Dwight Garner reviews.



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Ellsworth Kelly. *Sculpture for a Large Wall* (detail). 1957. Anodized aluminum, 104 panels. Gift of Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder. © 2012 Ellsworth Kelly



ABOVE AND BELOW LEFT: PRIVATE COLLECTION, LUCIAN FREUD ARCHIVE; BELOW CENTER: MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY, LUCIAN FREUD ARCHIVE; BELOW RIGHT: PRIVATE COLLECTION, STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART, LONDON, LUCIAN FREUD ARCHIVE

The collection of Freud works at Acquavella Galleries includes vividly colored pieces in conté crayon like “Chicken on a Bamboo Table” (1944) and a few oil works like “Small Garden” (1997), above right. Below, from left, the drawings on display include a louche “Study of Francis Bacon” (1951), “The Painter’s Mother” (1940) and “Boy in a Red and Blue Jacket” (1945).

A Painter Stripped Bare in Decades of Drawings

From Weekend Page 23

mid-1940s bear some resemblance to Neue Sachlichkeit works by George Grosz, Otto Dix and Christian Schad. Witness the icy, blue-eyed stare of “Boy on a Sofa,” or the spiky hair and aloof mien of “La Voisine (The Neighbour).” But other influences, notably Picasso and Ingres, can be discerned in “Boy in a Red and Blue Jacket” and in a marvelous pair of studies of Francis Bacon strutting around with an open shirt and trouser fly, from 1951.

It was Bacon who transformed Freud’s painting, persuading him to experiment with thick hog-bristle brushes. He seems to have had an equally radical impact on Freud’s drawing; in these studies it’s as if Bacon’s swashbuckling, sexually aggressive presence forced Freud to loosen up a little. We are a long way from the tightly wound “Man at Night: Self-Portrait” of 1947-8, with its tedious stippling.

At this point the show leaps ahead to

“Lucian Freud Drawings” continues through June 9 at Acquavella Galleries, 18 East 79th Street, Manhattan; (212) 734-6300, acquavellagalleries.com.



the 1970s and ’80s, skipping a decade or so during which Freud focused almost entirely on painting. When he returned to drawing, it was, as Mr. Feaver writes, “both in the paintings and a reaction or counterpoint to them.”

Soft strokes of charcoal lay the groundwork for small, probing oil portraits. Or drawings emerge from fin-



ished paintings: Turner’s “Sun Rising Through Vapour,” or Freud’s own “Large Interior WII (After Watteau).”

The results can be awfully poignant, as when a small painting of Freud’s depressive mother from 1972 is paired with a drawing of her from 1983. The signs of aging, already apparent in the painting, have been accentuated in the



drawing, which faithfully records its subject’s thinning hair and drooping head. At the same time, the shift from painting to the more intimate medium of drawing restores a modicum of dignity.

The end of the show finds Freud fully absorbed in etching and transferring some of its lessons to his drawings. The

ONLINE: LUCIAN FREUD

More of the artist’s drawings on display at Acquavella: nytimes.com/design

deep contours and webbed patches of a well-known 1993 etching of the bulging cranium of Leigh Bowery, for instance, find their way into quick sketches of heads (Isaiah Berlin, John Richardson, Balthus).

You can tell that Freud found etching more exciting than drawing on paper. The uncertainty of the printing process appealed to him; as he said, “You can’t tell how it will be.” We’ll never know how his last plate, “Head of Jeremy King,” might have turned out, though it looks promising: a long, craggy face that seems to sit right on the knot of a stiff necktie.

But drawing, he knew, had its own risks of failure. As he told the writer Martin Gayford in 2010: “Being able to draw well is the hardest thing — far harder than painting, as one can easily see from the fact that there are so few great draftsmen compared to the number of great painters — Ingres, Degas, Van Gogh, Rembrandt, just a few.”

A Portrait of the Artist As an Old Man in Love

Life was sweet for Picasso during his 10 years of romance and cohabitation with Françoise Gilot, from 1943 to 1953. Or so it would seem, judging by “Picasso and Françoise Gilot: Paris-Vallauris, 1943-1953,” a wonderful exhibition at Gagosian Gallery.

The Picasso of these years — he was in his 60s and early 70s — seems to revel in the joys of family and domesticity. Gone are the moonstruck years with Marie-Thérèse Walter and the violently conflicted ones with Dora Maar. The crazy-old-man last act is yet to come. Looking at pictures here of his young children Claude and Paloma at play, you can imagine yourself seeing through the eyes of a loving, benevolent father — who just happens to be the most inventive artist of the 20th century.

There may be other stories to tell about the Françoise years. Ms. Gilot told one in her invaluable memoir, “Life With Picasso” (1964). The tale told by this exhibition is the product of dialogue between Ms. Gilot, now 90, and John Richardson, Picasso’s biographer and the curator of previous crowd-pleasing Picasso shows at Gagosian, including “Picasso: Mosqueteros” in 2009 and “Picasso and Marie-Thérèse: L’Amour Fou” last year.

Ms. Gilot is the subject of many portraits picturing her not as a pneumatic odalisque or a weeping harpy but as a beauty of regal bearing, queen of the house. Picasso’s angry and mean side is not completely in abeyance; there are some female monsters on canvas here, but they mostly tend to the comical side. “Femme Nue Sur Fond Bleu” (1946), a painting of something resembling a sculpture made of rounded, gray boulders assembled into a vaguely female form by the people of some prehistoric civilization, is more funny than terrifying.

Curiously, there are almost no self-portraits (assuming, that is, that you do not view everything he made as self-portraiture). Picasso seems less preoccupied by his self and its conflicts than at other times. Maybe a painting

“Picasso and Françoise Gilot” continues through June 30 at the Gagosian Gallery, 980 Madison Avenue, near 77th Street; (212) 744-2313, gagosian.com.



TOP, 2012 FRANÇOISE GILOT, ALI ELAI/CAMERA ARTS INC. — GAGOSIAN GALLERY, PRIVATE COLLECTION

Françoise Gilot’s “Picasso’s Face (Portrait From Memory),” 1945, top, and Picasso’s “Enfant Dans Sa Voiture, February 20, 1949,” above.

from 1946 explains. Fine lines and curvy planes define a Cubist-style image of a woman with a knife in one hand and the bovine head of the Minotaur held by the other. Beauty has vanquished the troublemaking beast.

The numerous images of children stand out especially, because they are so uncommon in art of the avant-garde, for which having and raising offspring has never been a high priority. A few decades ago this phase of Picasso’s art was routinely dismissed as sentimental kitsch. In truth, there is a high sugar content. But emotional nuance was not Picasso’s strength; a caveman with a fe-

Picasso and Françoise Gilot Paris-Vallauris, 1943-1953 Gagosian Gallery

rocious analytic intellect, he was drawn to the mythic and the archetypal on the one hand and endlessly fascinated by the ways and means of painting on the other.

He was certainly inspired by the spectacle of his children at play. “Enfant Dans Sa Voiture” (1949) is a delightfully zany painting in red, white, blue and gray of an infant in a stroller. The baby’s head is twisted and flattened into a blob with displaced googly eyes, its chubby arms and hands pointing this way and that, and the wheels and other parts of its vehicle reconfigured into a geometric jumble. There is an infectious exuberance here that owes as much to the idea of the child as an agent of centrifugal energy as to the whirly, Cubist dynamics.

Sometimes abstraction and bodily gesture are neatly unified. In a painting from 1953, Paloma, age 3 or 4, sits on a red rug that fills the canvas. She leans forward on legs folded under her at a seemingly impossible angle, supporting herself on one straight arm and reaching with the other to slap a sausage-fingered paw on a yellow toy in the foreground. Rendered with wide brushes, the features of her round face defined by black lines and her cheeks spotted bright red, she embodies the kind of concentrated, albeit momentary urgency of intention and desire that is so characteristic of little children and, not incidentally, of Picasso himself, whose own attention span tended to be short but intense.

During this period Picasso got into painting pottery and making small clay sculptures of women. He also explored lithography in depth, mainly in the form of black-and-white portraits of Ms. Gilot. Both directions are well represented here, and they attest to a creative drive that was either compulsive or unfathomable, and always impatiently alive to the next possibility of any given medium.

The exhibition includes a selection of works by Ms. Gilot, who was an artist at 21, when she met Picasso, and continued to be after leaving him. Looking at



ABOVE AND BOTTOM LEFT, 2012 PABLO PICASSO/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK, MAURICE AESCHIMANN — GAGOSIAN GALLERY, PRIVATE COLLECTION

“Femme au Fauteuil N. 1 (d’Après le Rouge),” 1949, one of Picasso’s works depicting his lover Françoise Gilot as a regal beauty in serene domesticity.

the 30 paintings here, including naturalistic portraits of herself and her grandmother, Cubist still lifes and abstractions and pictures of herself and her children, you might think for a moment that you are looking at more Picassos.

But that impression is quickly dispelled by the overfinished quality of her work. Ms. Gilot clearly was a competent painter, but whereas, with Picasso, it seems that every painting is an adventure, every mark or stroke the registration of a thought or an impulse in real time, her works resemble dutifully completed assignments for a class in how to paint like Picasso.

What was life with Picasso really like? That is not a question that this

show answers. But one of two landscapes by him here is suggestive. In the wildly animated scene of “Paysage d’Hiver” (1950), each of two gnarly, leafless trees in the foreground reaches a branch toward the other, almost touching, as if with index fingers. Rolling, striped green fields in the middle distance lead to a couple of ramshackle farm buildings standing on the horizon line under a gloomy, gray sky that threatens stormy weather.

It could be an illustration for “Wuthering Heights,” if that Gothic romance had been set in Spain, and it might be a truer portrait of the spiritual marriage of Pablo and Françoise than anything else in the exhibition.

Art in Review

Rotimi Fani-Kayode

‘Nothing to Lose’
The Walther Collection Project Space
526 West 26th Street, Chelsea
Through July 28

“Black, African, homosexual photography” was how the Nigerian-born artist Rotimi Fani-Kayode described his work. And although little seen at the time of his death from AIDS in London in 1989, at 34, his pictures have become classic examples of the kind of rethinking and re-experiencing of identity that was transforming art three decades ago.

Fani-Kayode’s family moved to England from Nigeria as political exiles in 1966. He went to school in the United States — Georgetown University in Washington, Pratt Institute in Brooklyn — then settled in London. There, sometimes in collaboration with his partner, Alex Hirst (who died in 1994), he created a series of studio tableaus combining aspects of African and Western cultures.

In his last two series, “Nothing to Lose” and “Every Minute Counts,” excerpts from which make up most of the Walther Collection show, single figures, sometimes the artist himself, adorned with paint, feathers and flowers, perform what look like unidentified rituals. Partly they seem meant to refer to Yoruba religious culture, but some also read as burlesques of Western ethnographic photographs of the “primitive.”

There is, however, nothing essentially reactive in Fani-Kayode’s art. It is imaginatively theatrical, inventively erotic and a radical, positive departure from the photographic images of Africans — largely passive and documentary — that prevailed in the West up to that time. He unraveled the very notion that such a thing as “African” even existed. That he accomplished this in a career of barely six years is both the joy of his art and the sadness of it.

HOLLAND COTTER

Tribal Art New York

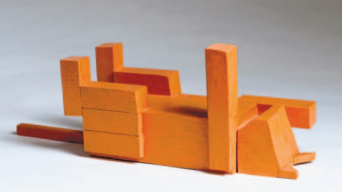
Fletcher-Sinclair Mansion
2 East 79th Street, Manhattan
Through Sunday

When it first appeared at the Seventh Avenue Armory several years ago, the Tribal Art Fair was a polycultural continent unto itself. After the Armory became unavailable, the fair dissolved into an archipelago of individual shows scattered across town. Now re-established by the art dealer Maureen Zarembor and renamed Tribal Art New York, it’s convening again, in smaller form, with more than a dozen galleries gathered in the wood-paneled rooms of the Fletcher-Sinclair Mansion on the Upper East Side.

Africa leads the way with carved-wood sculpture. A big, commanding Songye figure dominates the ground-floor



“Every Exit Is an Entrance: 30 Years of Exit Art” is that exhibition space’s final installation.



ANNE ARNOLD, D. JAMES DEE/ALEXANDRE GALLERY, NEW YORK

Above, “Orange Cat” from 1956, made of wooden blocks, by Anne Arnold. Right, one of the African masks on display at the Tribal Art New York fair, at the Fletcher-Sinclair Mansion in Manhattan.

display assembled by Visser Gallery from Belgium. Upstairs, a Baule carving of a male spirit spouse from Berz Gallery, of San Francisco, creates the opposite dynamic: slender, about a foot high, with a large head and a teardrop beard, it’s magnetically intimate rather than overpowering.

The Songye figure says: bow. The Baule figure says: kiss.

Galeria Guilhem Montagut, on a first New York trip from Barcelona, has brought a classic Fang ancestor figure. Squat and muscular, it looks like an infant wrestler, its skin gleaming with rubbed-in oil. There’s a similar piece at Galerie Flak, a Parisian visitor, though the main attraction here is a heart-faced female image, carved in low relief, painted and hailing from another world: Papua New Guinea. At these galleries, “tribal” spans a lot of geographic turf. But some dealers are specific in their interests.

Earl W. Duncan, from Stilwell, Kan., specializes in Native American material, as does Jeffrey Myers, who for decades has spent part of every year in Alaska on the trail of the tiny ancient ivories he shows. Claudia Giangola and John Menser are in charge of the fair’s pre-Columbian corner; their Olmec jade mask is an exhibition highlight. Gail Martin Gallery returns us to continent-leaping, with antique textile frag-



PRIVATE COLLECTION, NEW YORK

ments from Peru and ceramic pots from across Africa. Although the pots all share a basic globular form, they are unlike in every other way, and together reflect

the character of the fair, with its array of difference under one roof. It’s worth noting, by the way, that there’s a second fair, called Madison Ancient and Trib-

Lucian Freud Drawings

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“Randazzo,” detail

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al Art, in session this weekend at Arader Gallery, 1016 Madison Avenue (between 78th and 79th Streets), and several individual shows, like so many interconnected islands, dotting the Upper East Side.

HOLLAND COTTER

‘Every Exit Is an Entrance’

‘30 Years of Exit Art’

Exit Art
475 10th Avenue (at 36th Street),
Manhattan
Through May 19

This big archival survey documents the history of one of the premier nonprofit spaces in Manhattan, founded in 1982 by Jeanette Ingberman and Papo Colo. After Ms. Ingberman’s death last year, Mr. Colo decided to close the gallery, and this summing-up show will be its last.

In three successive spaces, including the present one, Exit Art organized a long series of important solo exhibitions by figures like David Hammons, Adrian Piper, David Wojnarowicz and Martin Wong early on, to the impressive young Puerto Rican artist Charles Juhasz-Alvarado in 2008. All of these artists are represented in the current roundup, although the show’s real interest lies in humbler, more ephemeral material — posters, news releases and photographs of the huge group shows for which Exit Art became well known — that provides the month-to-month, year-to-year record of the gallery’s life over changing times.

The group shows were often political in content, though sometimes obliquely so. The first of them, the 1982 “Illegal America,” tackled censorship well in advance of the culture wars to come. The 2002 “Reactions,” assembled through an open call on the Internet, ended up being one of the art world’s few truly international responses to the events of 9/11. Fittingly, for a gallery that practiced and thrived on cooperative creativity, a final program of performance art will include, through Saturday, work by the collective called Not an Alternative, working with two other groups, Organizing for Occupation (O4O) and members of the Occupy Wall Street movement, on issues of eviction defense and

foreclosure organizing.

On May 19 Mr. Colo will perform “Sweeping Memories,” a ritual cleansing of the Exit Art premises, which will thereafter be converted into a new gallery by Sean Kelly, a dealer in Chelsea. But this documentary survey, organized by Rachel Gugelberger, with Lauren Rosati and Lauren Graves, shouldn’t be missed. Get your history while it’s still warm.

HOLLAND COTTER

Anne Arnold

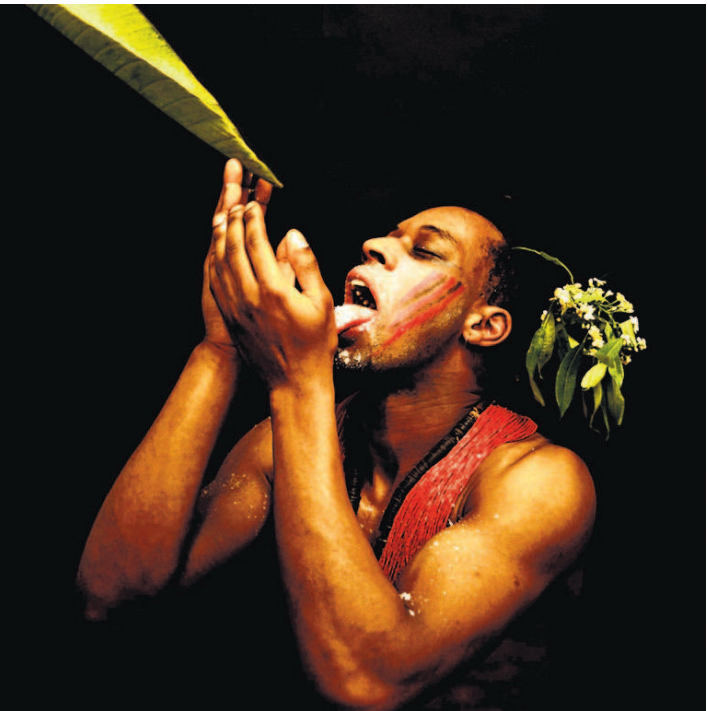
‘Sculpture From Four Decades’

Alexandre Gallery
41 East 57th Street, Manhattan
Through June 8

In the 1950s, when Abstract Expressionism was casting its triumphal shadow over American art and David Smith was making monuments out of industrial steel, Anne Arnold (born in 1925) created smart and humorous sculptures of dogs, people and other domestic creatures, and she continued on her own way for the next three decades. In this delightful, crowded show of 27 pieces from the ’50s to the late ’80s, the tension is between the seeming liveliness of the animals and the obviously nonliving materials they are made of, including wood, clay and bronze. You might pause a beat before recognizing a 1956 construction of rectangular wooden blocks painted bright orange as a cat lying on its back with its feet in the air. The effect of something so obviously artificial appearing so lifelike is funny and mysterious.

In the ’70s Ms. Arnold made life-size and bigger sculptures by wrapping canvas over wooden armatures. Painted the color of pink marble, “Bill (Horse)” represents the front half of a horse with splayed forelegs struggling to stand. Some works have Pop Art in their DNA; the sculptor Marisol comes to mind. But most are too naturalistic to be taken only for signs. A carved-wood cat sitting with one lifted paw glances our way with typically feline disinterest. A ceramic dachshund with pleading eyes standing up on its hind legs projects that irresistible sense of personality that makes so many people fools for their pets.

KEN JOHNSON



ROTIMI FANI-KAYODE/THE WALTHER COLLECTION AND AUTOGRAPH ABP, LONDON

“Nothing to Lose VII” by Rotimi Fani-Kayode, part of a show of that artist’s work at the Walther Collection Project Space.

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