

ARTFORUM

Nancy Shaver and Emi Winter

PARKER GALLERY

“Gathering texture, following shape” featured Nancy Shaver’s sculptures and Emi Winter’s woven rugs and paintings. While the works’ vocabularies did not always rhyme, their joint installation set up a visual call-and-response that made itself at home in the many rooms of the Parker Gallery, located in a house. Both artists also share a sympathy for what Shaver has called “collective history,” perhaps more broadly understood as the lives and works of others, and the circumstances of their coming together.

One especially eloquent room contained Shaver’s sandbox-like *Blue Pool*, 2018, a horizontal trough in an optimistic shade of turquoise that contained an organized grid of stacked wooden blocks wrapped in T-shirts and other found fabrics. The aggregation’s logic of ludic mutability extended to her nearby iterations of *Sentinel*, all 2018—each a figurine in a different state of legibility, and each insistently vertical, with an upright base of one or two anthropomorphic legs—which she arranged into a coterie of six spirits set on the room’s fireplace. Facing outward, they reigned over Winter’s wool carpets, *Zapotec Cut-Outs VII* and *Zapotec Cut-Outs X*, both 2014: trompe l’oeil fields of fragments convincingly excerpted or layered within a tight weave. On the wall nearest to *Blue Pool* hung Winter’s *Scissors and Roses (yellow)*, 2018, its minty background softening the image of elongated blades slicing buds from their stems.

Other pieces by Winter were similarly guided by reconfigurations, particularly the carpet work situated in a recess of the household, hanging in the stairwell, where it eschewed utility. Its black background punched an optically recessive hole in the space and was accompanied by other motifs of traditional design and of craft manufacturing that gestured toward Winter’s upbringing in Oaxaca, Mexico. Winter now works with Zapotec weavers, using surviving patterns to create carpets that come closer than expected to Victorian crazy quilts in their studied disunity. Found objects likewise serve as source material for Shaver, who opened an antique shop in Hudson, New York, in 1999 and has since moved things—textiles and tools among them—between her displays there and the studio or gallery. *Flat Goods*, 2006, was a Jenga-like tower of blocks individually wrapped in a riotous array of textiles, from monochromes in tangerine and peacock to eccentric paisleys, plaids, and polka dots. Comically, it serves as a pedestal for a single knee sock.



Nancy Shaver, *Flat Goods*, 2006, wood, fabric, hand-knitted sock, 15 x 32 x 17½".

So much of the pair’s work suggested a confluence of the legacies of display of the flea market and the white cube. And to be sure, the point seemed very much that these sites are far from antithetical. (Perhaps they were never really otherwise.) Indeed, though Shaver and Winter both had work on view in “Outliers and American Vanguard Art,” which opened last year at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Shaver had another massive project at the city’s Museum of Contemporary Art as part of the recent exhibition “One Day at a Time: Manny Farber and Termite Art,” this presentation was scheduled to coincide with the inaugural Los Angeles Frieze week. As a structure turned theme, domesticity became the elephant in the Parker Gallery’s well-decorated living room—and the show was the better for it.

—Suzanne Hudson

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