

SEPTEMBER 2013

ARTnews

James Turrell: The Light Stuff

**Magritte's
Grand Illusions**

**Studio Visits:
Dos and Don'ts**

**Armory Show:
Refuting the Myths**



have the appearance of rusted I-beams and house drawings on crimson paper that combine Egyptian mysticism and the Detroit auto industry.

“Subliming Vessel” also featured vitrines full of related paraphernalia and a new commission, *Drawing Restraint 20*, part of Barney’s ongoing series of performances in which he attempts to draw, in a bodily way, while physically hampered. In this case, he drew with a heavily loaded barbell in a closed-off gallery. Viewers were left with the aftermath: weights, rags, buckets, graphite powder, petroleum jelly, and marks on the wall, which included an arcing smear, a heavenly body, a horizon line, and a chart associating weightlifting reps with ancient Egyptian concepts of the soul. Without witnessing the action, our imaginations ran free as we pictured the athletic artist, hindered by weights, struggling to make his mark.

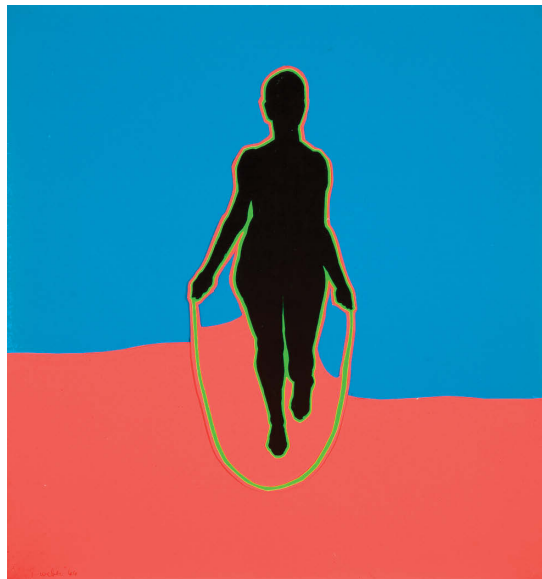
—Trent Morse

Idelle Weber

Hollis Taggart Galleries

This welcome survey of Idelle Weber’s works, dating mostly from 1961 to ‘71, with one small acrylic from 1995, was dominated by the artist’s striking paintings of humans in black silhouette. The exhibition highlighted Weber’s Pop works in a variety of media, including Lucite, Color-aid paper, Mylar, and Plexiglas. Like that of her male contemporaries—not least, Warhol and Lichtenstein—Weber’s practice included painting in a streamlined manner that shared Pop’s preoccupation with the flat surface and eagerness to distance itself from the dominating shadow of Abstract Expressionism.

But Weber’s carefully hand-painted figures and detailed backgrounds were unusual for a time when mass production was considered cool. She created a singular vocabulary based on archetypes such as



Idelle Weber, *Jump Rope Lady*, 1966, collage with Color-aid paper, 12½" x 12". Hollis Taggart Galleries.

“bride and groom” and, most especially, the “businessman” and his urban journey. Fascinated by the nine-to-five corporate structure of the post-World War II years, Weber singled out the suited men in her pictures as captains of industry. They came across as nonaggressive cogs in an unseen wheel.

In the triptych *Munchkins I, II & III* (1964), the largest work in the exhibition at 72 by 214 inches, the artist depicts black acrylic silhouettes of calm but presumably upwardly mobile white-collar men riding a stylized diagonal band meant to represent an escalator. The yellow-and-black taxi-colored background creates a striking contrast within this metaphor for the corporate structure bracketing these modern lives.



Richard Misrach, *Untitled (November 20, 2011 3:36 PM)*, 2011, pigment print mounted to aluminum image, paper and mount, 59¼" x 105½". Pace/MacGill Gallery.

Among the dozens of drawings, paintings, paper constructions, and photographic ephemera from her own collection, Weber celebrated women as well as men. In *Woman with Jump Rope* (ca. 1964–5), a slightly larger than life-size black Plexiglas woman leaps over a yellow neon rope.

—Doug McClemt

Richard Misrach

Pace/MacGill Gallery

The large photographs in this show were a continuation of Richard Misrach’s “On the Beach” series, which was first exhibited at the gallery in 2004. Shot from an oceanside hotel balcony in Hawaii, the pictures capture isolated figures in the water or on the sand.

Although seen from a great distance, they appear surprisingly sharp and legible in these nearly 5-by-7-foot prints created with digital equipment. As in earlier works from the series, these unsettling pictures capture their subjects seemingly unaware, suggesting omniscient surveillance. The vastness surrounding Misrach’s tiny figures was inspired in part by the events of September 11.

In two sets of photos, the artist seemed to compare the textured, repeating surface of the water with that of the beach, where sunbathers camp—exposed except for their faces. A tanned man in a beach chair reads a magazine. We can see its headline (“Living with Mystery”) and can peek into his bag (pistachio nuts), but his face remains hidden behind the

pages. In another, a man in a clear raincoat sits on his towel with his shoes, jeans, and bike helmet at one end and his back toward us. In a third, a woman is fully wrapped in a tropical-print towel with only a shapely leg and a bit of sandy blond hair peeking out. Opposite these photos were three images that show only the ocean’s rippled, glossy surface. The juxtaposition suggested