



# TOP

## EZRHA JEAN BLACK'S PICKS OF 2018

» I make no claim as to the comprehensiveness or objectivity of this selection. Nevertheless, to the extent that it reflects personal priorities, I believe most artists, if not the entire art community, both local and international, acknowledge the existential criticality of the moment. In one way or another, each of these exhibitions has engaged this moment as it intersects with a specific place or places—fractured foundations extending no further than consciousness and destined to vanish. As always, beauty is privileged, the sublime revered.

### Outliers and American Vanguard Art

LACMA

In an age of catastrophic displacements, LACMA's (and the National Gallery's) exhibition surveyed an intersectional expansion of consciousness between the culturally endorsed and what the conventional critical discourse can't (or won't) process.

### Merlon Estes: Unnatural Disasters

CRAFT & FOLK ART MUSEUM

This compact retrospective was an aurora borealis to throw light not merely on the Sixth Extinction, but the attenuated human consciousness that set it in motion—and Estes shows us beauty in the dying light.

### A grammar built with rocks

(Carmen Argote, Julien Creuzet, DAAR, Sandra de la Loza, Regina José Galindo, Adam Khalil, Zack Khalil and Jackson Polys, Zara Kuredjian, Uriel Orlow, Gala Porras-Kim, Susan Sifton, Cauleen Smith) HUMAN RESOURCES

A geo-cultural archaeology of the human trace, the stain of consciousness and identity, the violence and social politics of survival—a break-through intersection of art and natural history.

### Christopher Russell: Explorers

VON LINTEL GALLERY

Russell's work deconstructs romance to stoke fires both sacred and profane—an acid IV-drip seeping into consciousness subliminally to set our synapses on fire.

### Channa Horwitz: Structures

GHEBALY GALLERY

Possibly the best exhibition of Horwitz's groundbreaking work to date, the show put both the rigorous musicality and architectural scope of her work on display to sublime effect.

### Adrian Piper: Concepts and Intuitions, 1965–2016

HAMMER MUSEUM

Underappreciated in the U.S., Piper's work comes as an austere yet exuberant wake-up call: "Everything will be taken away"—she's not kidding around.

### Francesca Gabbiani: Vague Terrains/Urban Fuckups

QAVLAK GALLERY

Gabbiani's dark mirror visions have gradually given way to the quotidian nightmare, and she is fearless and alive to it, reclaiming beauty from the ruins.

### Danial Nord: Cloud Nine

TORRANCE ART MUSEUM

Nord's installation effectively walked us through hell's gates and into its ninth circle, i.e., the contemporary human condition, showing us how our hyper-connected, mediated society manages to function in nature, yet simultaneously against nature.

### Jess: Secret Compartments

KOHN GALLERY

A cross-section of the most formative periods of Jess's work, this museum-scale exhibition gave full-throated voice to the disparate beauties from the enigmatic to Arcadian Jess prized from the crevices of his imagination and the world beyond.

### Stones to Stains: The Drawings of Victor Hugo

HAMMER MUSEUM

Hugo, acknowledged literary master, is revealed in this exhibition as visual artist of jaw-dropping visionary power, anticipating 20<sup>th</sup> century developments as diverse as abstract expressionism, art brut, and Raymond Pettibon.

### Honorable Mentions

Nicole Eisenman: *Dark Light*, Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects

Roland Reiss: *Unrepentant Flowers and New Miniature Tableaux*, Diane Rosenstein Gallery

Julie Curtiss: *Altered States*, Various Small Fires

Bamboo, Craft & Folk Art Museum  
William Lamson: *Badwater*, Make Room

Left to right: Danial Nord, *Cloud Nine*, 2018, installation view, photo by Gine Ogami; Cauleen Smith, *Remote Viewing*, 2009, video still, courtesy of the artist; Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago, and Kate Werble Gallery, New York; Sister Gertrude Morgan, *Revelation 7*, chap. c. 1970, paint on wood, 32 1/4 x 15 3/8 in., The Museum of Everything, London, photo © Todd White Art Photography; Francesca Gabbiani, *The Unresolved Story*, 2016–17, ink, gouache and colored paper on paper, 105 x 72 in., courtesy of the artist and Qavlak Gallery

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