

ART SEEN: CHICAGO

ASSISTED // KAVI GUPTA GALLERY

by Stephanie Cristello

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Curated by and including work of artist Jessica Stockholder, whose exhibition *Door Hinges* is concurrently on view in the lower galleries of Kavi Gupta's Elizabeth Street location, *ASSISTED* features sixteen artists, and could easily be a visual essay on form and object-hood. Here, the group exhibition format is approached as a work in and of itself, with all of the included pieces echoing Stockholder's idiosyncratic method, and in many cases approximating her work.



ASSISTED, Installation view. Courtesy of Kavi Gupta Gallery, 2015.

The viewer's sightlines are taken into consideration more than in most group exhibitions—every position, angle, and vantage point is transformed into a vista that makes a singular installation out of multiple artists. The primary clinch of this achievement is Stockholder's sensibility, which permeates all of the chosen works and follows a set of necessary prescriptions: the form must in some way be related to the readymade; the formal palette of the work must be intentional (either works are steadfastly the natural color of the material, or the artists' chosen colors directly relate to the concept of the piece); and above all the approach must be inventive, but avoid novelty. These rules are immediately obvious. So is the objects' expected relationship to *painting*. The sort of self-aware originality in all the artworks intersects with and overwrites itself. As with Stockholder's aesthetics, this is originality on overdrive—and the exhibition revels in the cacophony.

ASSISTED guides us along the tightrope between the expected and the divergent.

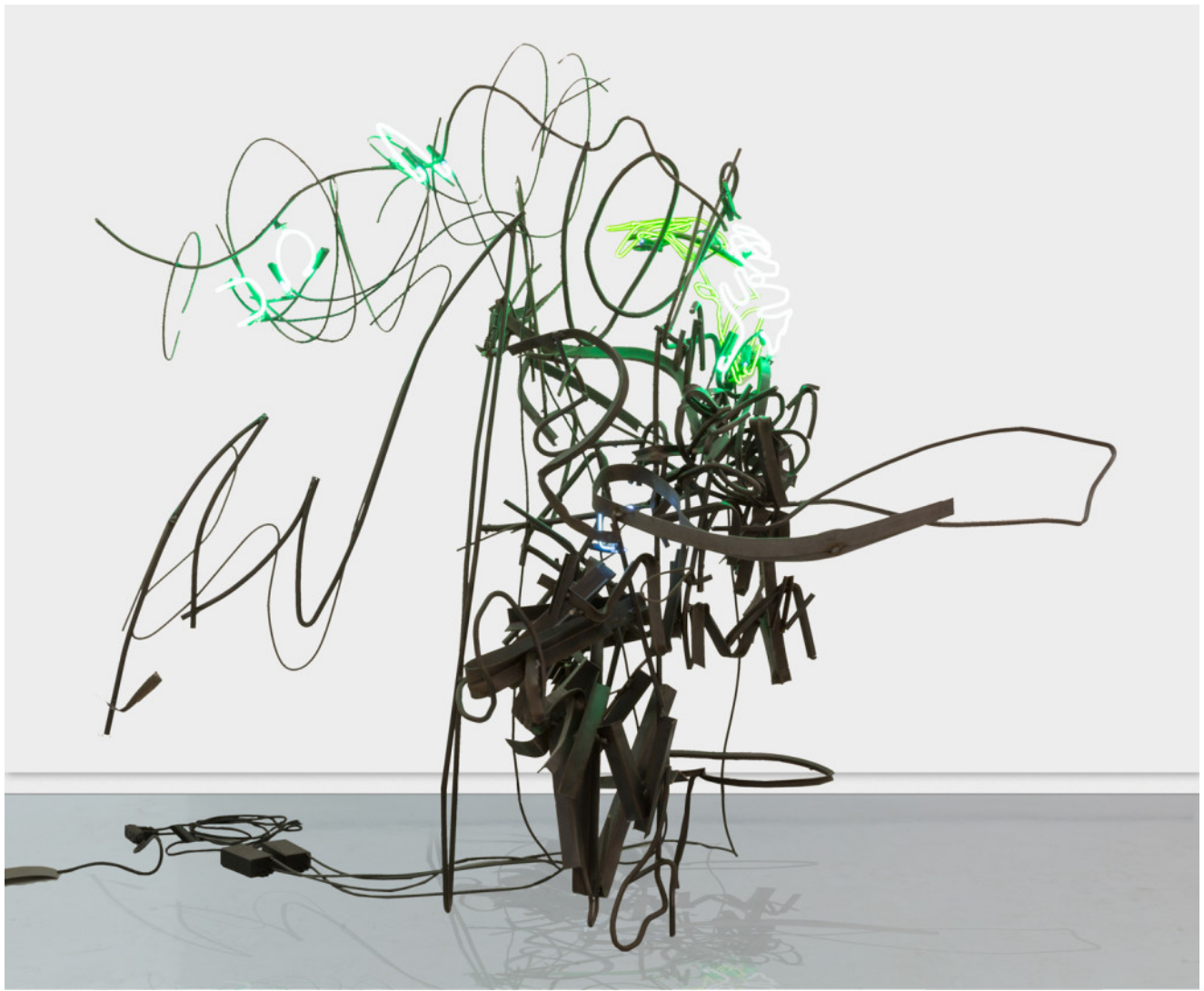


Sam Moyer Marshall Field's 2015 Bronze and marble, 70 x 56 x 6". Courtesy of the artist and Kavi Gupta Gallery

We are first met with Sam Moyer's *Marshall Field's*, a bronze and marble "painting" whose subtle curves describe a geometric composition through the presence and absence of the material. The title, whose name references the Chicago department store before it became Macy's, allows the viewer to consider the work's set-design qualities. Though the piece hangs on the wall, it could just as easily occupy a store window. It claims both territories. This same awareness, we could even call it "duplicity," is upfront in Haim Steinbach's installation of *either and or*—two pieces (necessarily separate, as one word is painted on a free-standing wall, and the other directly onto the gallery wall). The statement: painting is both, and installation is itself.



ASSISTED, Installation view, left to right: Jessica Stockholder, Haim Steinbach, Patrick Chamberlain. Courtesy of Kavi Gupta Gallery



Jo Nigoghossian, *Dragon*, 2015. Steel and neon 100" x 48" x 74" image courtesy of Kavi Gupta Gallery.

The privilege of painting, in Stockholder's framework, is that its terms are loose and easily exploitable. That Jo Nigoghossian's *Dragon*—a metal and neon scribble in space—and Polly Apfelbaum's *City Lights*—a painted and embellished carpet—can be viewed in the same proximity is a refreshing challenge to the influx of most contemporary abstraction.

The idea of environment is incredibly important to this show—what the group lends to Stockholder, as an artist, is also offered to the viewer.

ASSISTED at Kavi Gupta Gallery runs through January 16, 2016. Select text originally published as part of a larger feature on *ArtSlant*.

Stephanie Cristello is the Editor-in-Chief for THE SEEN, the Senior Editor US for ArtSlant, and contributes frequently to *ArtReview*.

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