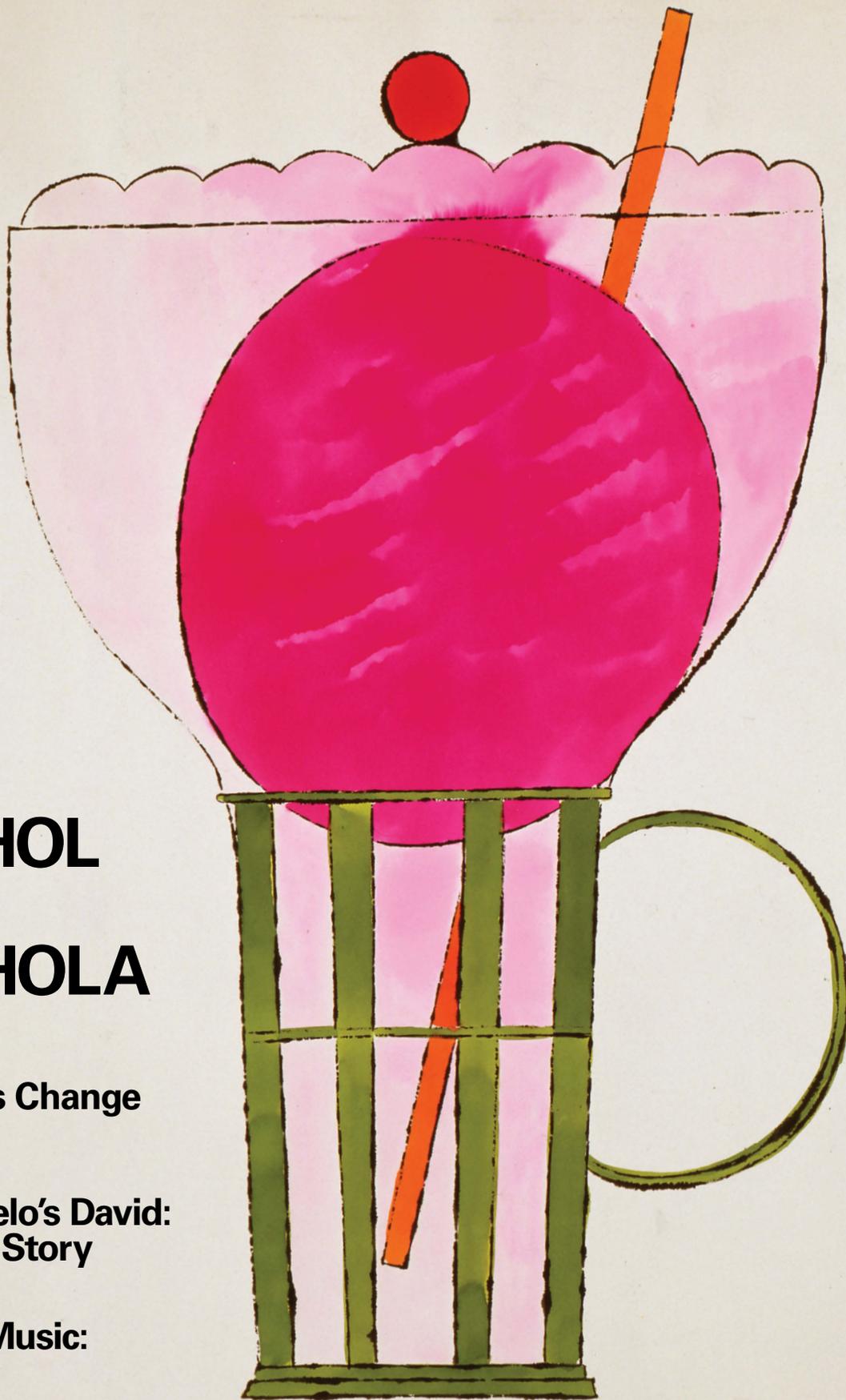


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ARTnews



When WARHOL Was WARHOLA

Can Artists Change
the World?

Michelangelo's David:
The Inside Story

Artists & Music:
Tuning In

Martin Puryear

Hempill Fine Arts
Washington, D.C.

Martin Puryear is celebrated for evocative, handmade sculptures fashioned primarily from wood or wire mesh and tar, which are noted for their consummate craftsmanship; inventive, unusual beauty; and rich symbolism. This revelatory exhibition in his hometown proved that he is also a skillful creator of freestanding prints, many of which echo the organic shapes and appealing surfaces of his sculptures. Showcasing his penchant for reductive forms that eschew the impersonal, machine aesthetic associated with Minimalism, the show demonstrated that, in his etchings as in his sculptures, Puryear exercises subtle mastery.

Most works on view were not sketches for sculptures, but the exceptions were three aquatint-and-drypoint etchings that appear to represent strings of beads, and are in fact renderings of a work that will be installed next year at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. *Black Cart* (2008)—a black blob with wheels attached, viewed in silhouette from above—is a compelling exercise in perspective and definition.

Another etching, *Lean To* (2012), mixes contrasts of light and dark on the surface of a solid structure (perhaps a squat block of weathered wood) and reflects the artist's interest in dwelling structures, bringing to mind everything from a Native American lodge to a frontiersman's digs. *Phrygian* (2012), which refers to an ancient region of central Asia Minor in modern-day Turkey, depicts a hollowed-out, curvilinear form. Resonating particularly with the wooden sculptures Puryear has created in recent years, the image rejects Minimalist purity and suggests instead the rich diversity of cultures that inform the artist's visual vocabulary.

Ultimately, each print in this focused show stood on its own, with its own set of references and allu-



Martin Puryear, *Black Cart*, 2008, color aquatint etching with *chine collé*, 35" x 28". Hempill Fine Arts.

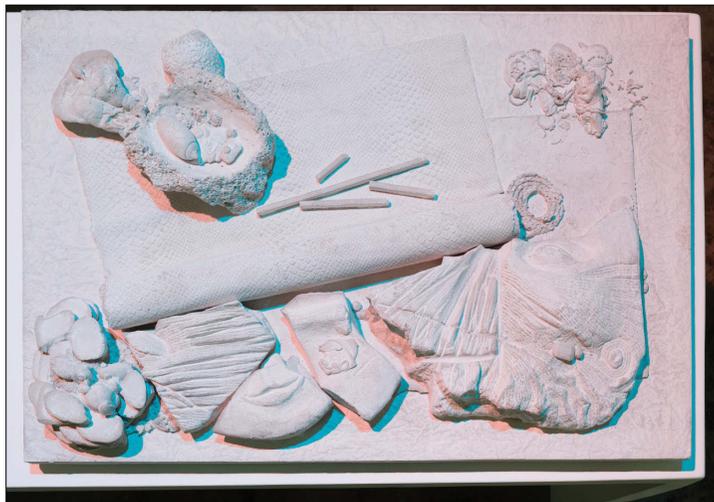
sions. Viewed together, the works underscored that accessibility does not rule out subtlety, and demonstrated that Puryear, the famous sculptor, should also be recognized as a challenging and exquisite draftsman.

—Stephen May

Isabelle Cornaro

LA×ART
Los Angeles

French artist Isabelle Cornaro's exhibition "This Morbid Roundtrip from Subject to Object" offered viewers an extraordinary journey into the secret lives of quotidian



Isabelle Cornaro, *Homonymes I*, 2014, plaster, 19½" x 30" x 3½". LA×ART.

objects. Throughout the show—which featured three short 16 mm films and one plaster sculpture—coins, buttons, decorative glass, lightbulbs, broken pottery, and other found bits were transformed by magnification, colored light and shadows, camera motion, and invisible force.

In the 2008 film *Premier Rêve d'Oskar Fischinger (Part II)*, made as an homage to the German pioneer of abstract film, Cornaro reveals an entire universe of organic forms by zooming into the center of a blown-glass paperweight and exploding its scale. In the film *Figures* (2011), the camera pans across an array of objects neatly laid out on a flat surface, and then comes in for a closer look. Some of the artist's foundlings seem almost animated by the attention of her lens: at one point, a group of metal buttons mysteriously starts to shake while the other items remain still.

Movement that appears to originate from within the very objects themselves was echoed in the *Film-Lampe* (2010), in which an assortment of lightbulbs displayed against a plain background periodically trembles as if reacting to a mild earthquake. Projected on adjacent walls, each film could be viewed as a painterly abstraction or a sculpture in motion, seemingly inspired by the Surrealists' use of cast-off objects to evoke cycles of life and death. Seen together, the works offered intriguing correspondences of color, form, and movement.

The sole sculpture on view here,

Homonymes I (2014), was made in Los Angeles for the show as part of an ongoing series of slip-cast works. In sharp contrast to the films, the small object appeared as an off-white landscape, solid and inert. But, preserved in plaster and dramatically lit to cast turquoise and peach shadows, this composition of reptilian-textured cloth and various bits of detritus gained new life as a work of art. For Cornaro, nothing is quite as ordinary as it may seem.

—Suzanne Muchnic