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Top Ten Contemporary Art Exhibits in 2013

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I can't think of a better way to open myself up to the slings and arrows of rebuke than making a top ten list like this. But someone did ask me to list the five best 2013 exhibits off the top of my head. I took them up on that and then added five more. If memorability is in fact, as Henry Geldzahler claimed, a good measure of aesthetic goodness, then perhaps this list is of some worth. So here goes...my top ten contemporary art exhibits in 2013. No ranking is intended in this list beyond just making the cut. My servitude to pop culture convention only goes so far.

Benjamin Degen / Shadow Ripple Reflection

Susan Inglett Gallery
Chealsea, NY
24 Oct - 7 Dec, 2013



Benjamin Degen, *Dapple*, 2013, Oil on linen over panel, 36 x 54 in.
Courtesy: Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.

With *Shadow Ripple Reflection*, an uplifting exhibition of eight new paintings, Benjamin Degen showed us that he is better than ever. These works skirt bravely close to cliché: sunshine, youthful figures lounging, reading, swimming, setting out and returning. But they take positive hold on the memory because they seem so unfamiliar in the fanatical and web-like detail in the non-flesh passages. In the most complex sections it is as if the pigment spun from spinnerets of a spider. The work may nod toward Matisse, Bonnard, Seurat, Renoir and Gauguin, but it is absolutely recognizable only as itself.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila: Olentoja (Creatures)

Davis Museum at Wellesley College,
Wellesley, MA
Sep 18 - Jan 5, 2014

Nicolas Consuegra

Gallery Booth for La Central Gallery, Bogota, Columbia
Miami Beach Art Basel, Miami, FL
Dec 4-8, 2013

Carnegie International Exhibition

Nicole Eisenman Survey in the Hall of Sculpture
Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, PN
Carnegie Museum October 5, 2013 - March 16 2014

Laura McPhee: River of No Return

Kemper Contemporary Museum of Art,
Kansas City, MO
May 17-September 22, 2013

Richard Serra: New Sculpture

Gagosian Gallery West 24th Street, NYC
Through March 15, 2014
Gagosian Gallery West 21st Street NYC
Through February 8, 2014

Li Songsong/We Have Betrayed the Revolution

Pace, London
Sept 19, 2013 - Nov 09, 2013

James Turrell

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, NYC
June 21-September 25, 2013

Ai Weiwei: According to What?

Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM)
Miami, FL
Dec. 4, 2013 - March 16, 2014