

Upcycling: 5 Artists Inventively Using Reclaimed Materials

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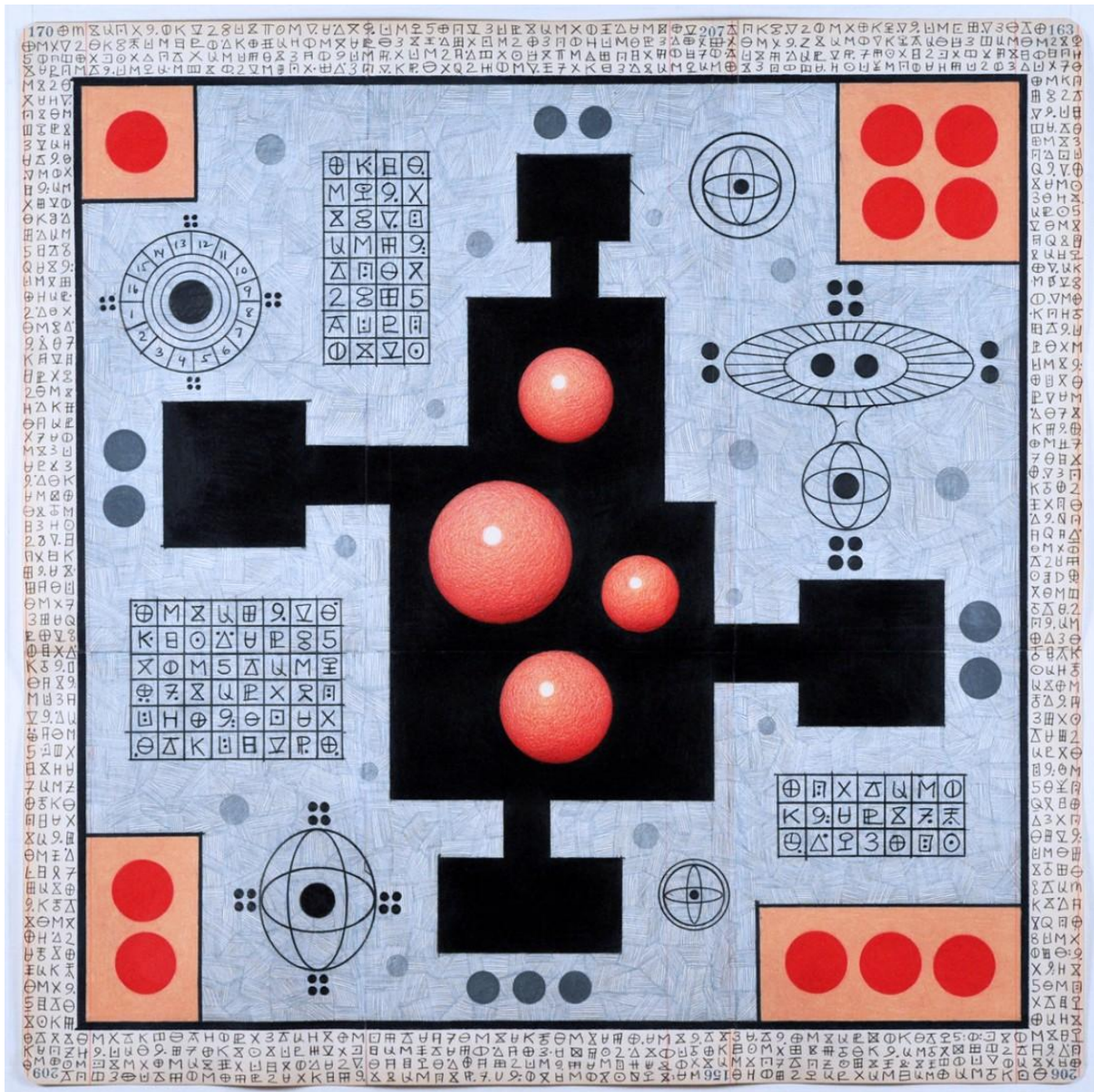


PHOTO BY MELISSA GOODWIN. COURTESY PACE GALLERY.
Installation view of Julian Schnabel: *The Patch of Blue the Prisoner Calls the Sky* at Pace Gallery.

Artists have been working with found objects since the beginnings of modernism, but the meaning implied by the objects that they use and the way that they employ them is always changing. Change, in fact, is one of the main reasons for working with reclaimed materials. Art can change the world—at least from what it was to what it can become.

Rodney McMillian, whose solo at Petzel is one of the exhibitions highlighted in this round-up of New York shows dealing with the transformation of found objects, calls these type of goods “post-consumer,” because after they’ve served their use and become discarded, they enter another system, where artists give them new lives.

In current times, we’re in need of change. The five exhibitions highlighted here offer formulas for renewal in surprisingly inventive ways.



COURTESY ANDREW EDLIN GALLERY
Karla Knight, *Spaceship 9*, 2017-19.

Karla Knight: Notes from the Lightship Andrew Edlin Gallery

Employing recycled ledger paper as the ground for her drawings, collages and paintings, Karla Knight makes diagrammatic, pseudo-scientific abstractions that utilize a personal hieroglyphic vocabulary, which she's developed and refined over the past twenty years. Initially inspired by her five-year-old son, who invented his own letters while learning to read and write, Knight mixes her language with colorful graphic signs and symbols, which are both imagined and

universal. Reminiscent of computer motherboards and floor plans for houses, shops and airports, her visionary compositions function like spaceships, in which Knight can upload her abstract characters and forms, stylistic references to artists she admires and imagery from her earlier, more surreal, works.



COURTESY ANDREW EDLIN GALLERY.

Installation view of Karla Knight: Notes from the Lightship at Andrew Edlin Gallery.

Offering a selection of small- and medium-scale drawings and collages with several larger canvases, Notes from the Lightship is Knight's first solo show at Andrew Edlin Gallery, which has a history of exhibiting works by both trained and untrained artists. And Knight's a perfect fit, as her marvelous machinelike imagery relates as much to Alfred Jensen's lively checkerboard abstractions as it does to Ionel Talpazan's fascinating drawings of UFOs.