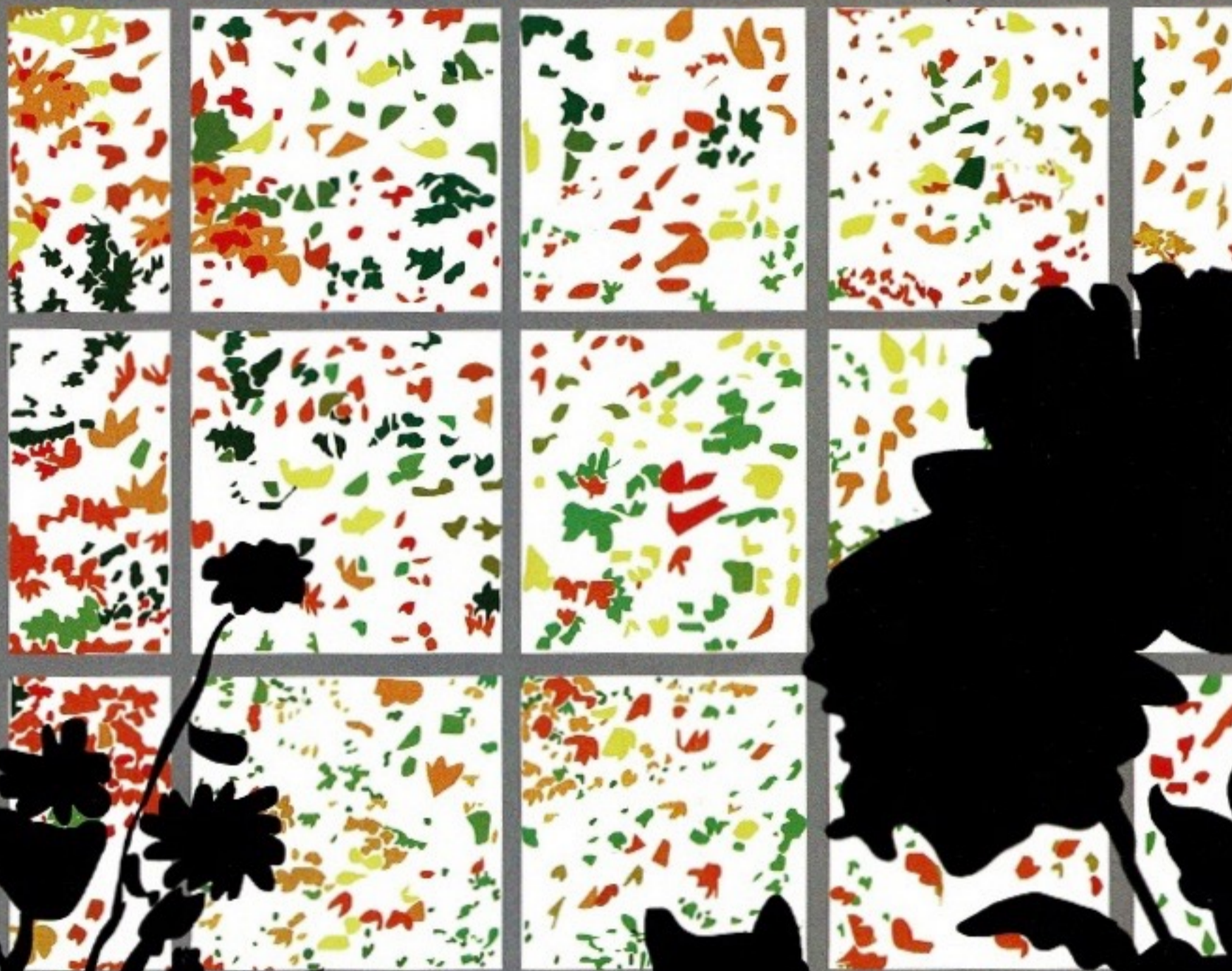


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# THE NEW YORKER

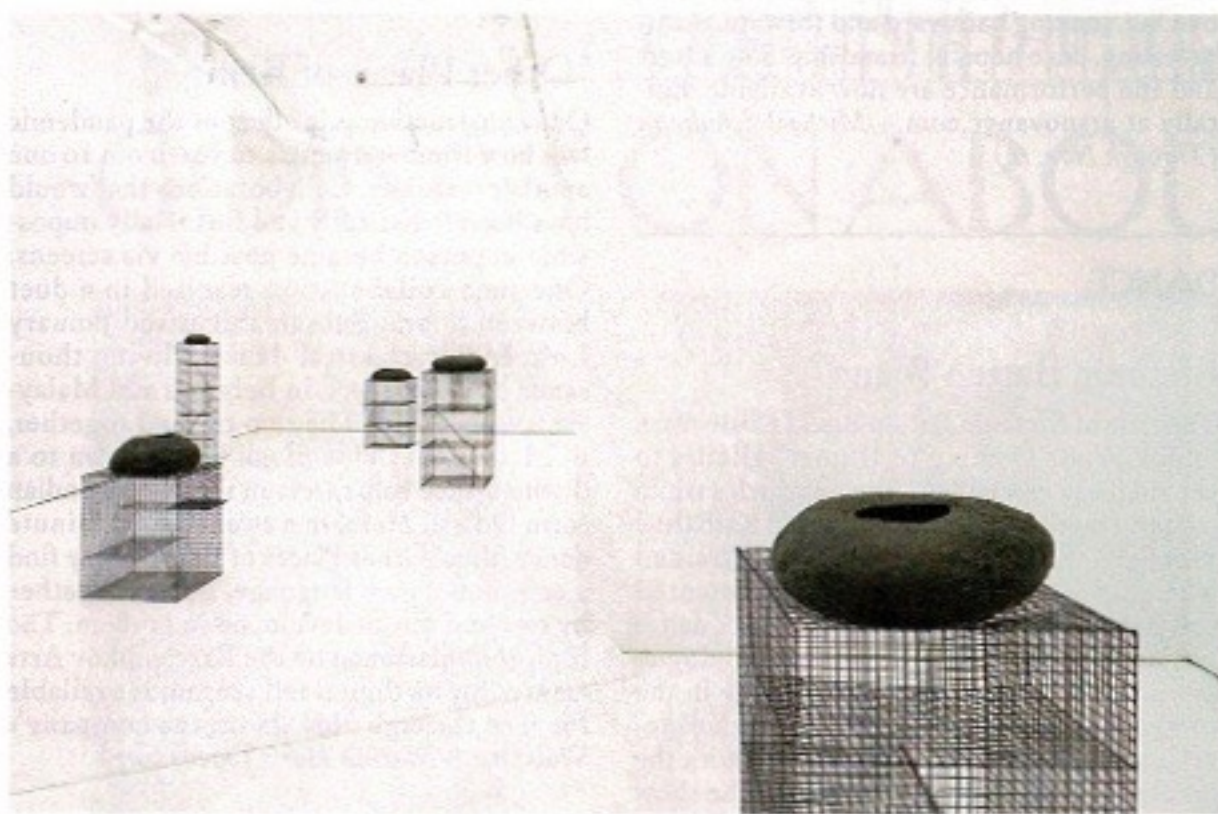


  
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*Ku Po Dun*

## AT THE GALLERIES



This photograph of “Holes,” a new show by **Elizabeth Jaeger**, is keeping a secret, and so are the sculptures themselves. From a distance, the exhibition—which inaugurates Jack Hanley’s new Tribeca gallery and is on view through Nov. 20—appears to be an austere arrangement of a dozen black ceramic vessels. But approach, and you’ll discover that each one hides a small world, ranging in mood from Orwellian (the regimented desk-dwellers of “Office”) to romantic (the nude couple embracing in “Midnight”) and surreal (the tiny figure clutching its tinier doppelgänger in “Zoom Zoom”). Jaeger heightens the air of surprise with unexpected shifts in scale: not all of her characters are Lilliputian. Those midnight lovers embrace in a three-inch-wide bowl, but the two-foot-wide container of “Catnap” conceals a life-size clay feline. (There are no mice in these scenarios, but you may think of Stuart Little; at times, Jaeger’s winsome figuration suggests a Garth Williams illustration in three dimensions.) Of course, the isolation of the past pandemic months is a touchstone, but so is the interiority of mental states, whether waking or dreaming. The contemplative mood continues in “Gutted,” an exhibition, on view through Dec. 1, of Jaeger’s piscine blown-glass sculptures (inspired by Roman lachrymatory bottles) at Mister Fahrenheit, an intriguing new project space, in the West Village, tucked into a secret garden behind a green gate.—*Andrea K. Scott*

## ART

### JJ Manford

There is a beguiling stillness reminiscent of the bedtime book “Goodnight Moon” in this New York painter’s domestic scenes—and, in fact, there is at least one lunar orb to be found in most of the vibrant canvases in Manford’s new show, at the Derek Eller gallery. (“Interior with Giraffe Sculpture and Calder Print,” from 2021, with its patio view and candy-colored sky, is a sunny exception.) These beautifully, and sometimes bizarrely, decorated rooms are devoid of people, but they’re occupied by a menagerie of animals. Textiles are another prominent presence, their rich textures echoing Manford’s process: his use of layered color and scumbling accentuates

the tactility of his paintings’ linen and burlap surfaces. The works vary in scale, and the largest evoke theatrical sets. Among the most enchanting pieces on view is “The Toucan Vase,” rendered in a palette recalling that of van Gogh’s “The Bedroom.” Nearly eight feet tall, it places viewers at the base of a grand red staircase, as if extending an invitation to climb it.—*Johanna Fateman (derekeller.com)*

### “Niloufar Emamifar, SoiL Thornton, and an Oral History of Knobkerry”

Three tenuously related projects—one wonderful nonfiction book and installations by two artists—are united in this rather cryptic exhibition, on view in the SculptureCenter’s catacombs-like basement. The fascinating sub-

ject of the writer and oral historian Svetlana Kitto’s elegant volume is the artist-designer and downtown doyenne Sara Penn, the visionary proprietor of the multiethnic gallery-boutique Knobkerry. From the nineteen-sixties through the nineties, Knobkerry displayed imported textiles, baskets, and masks, as well as Penn’s influential pan-Africanist-inspired couture. In conversations, a range of the entrepreneurial designer’s friends and contemporaries, the artist David Hammons among them, describe the space as a magnet for celebrities and fashion-forward hippies, while also underscoring the importance of the shop as a Black-owned business and a site for impromptu avant-garde gatherings. (The book is available, free of charge, in the show.) It’s unclear how this historical investigation connects to the contemporary art works on view, but Thornton’s sculptures (which include Virgil Abloh x IKEA shopping bags, filled with petroleum jelly, and high-concept dresses made of tinfoil, tangled wire, and jingle bells) and Emamifar’s engagement with SculptureCenter’s past (she contributes a building proposal, an architectural model, and a full-scale woodshop) are an intriguing pairing, nonetheless.—*J.F. (sculpture-center.org)*

### “Surrealism Beyond Borders”

This huge, deliriously entertaining show, at the Met, surveys the transnational spread of Surrealism, a movement that was codified by the poet and polemicist André Breton in 1924, in Paris. (It had roots in Dada, which emerged in Zurich, in 1916, in infuriated, tactically clownish reaction to the pointlessly murderous First World War.) Most of the show’s hundreds of works—and nearly all of the best—date from the next twenty or so years. As you would expect, there’s the lobster-topped telephone by Salvador Dalí and the locomotive emerging from a fireplace by René Magritte, both from 1938 and crowd-pleasers to this day. But the show’s superb curators, Stephanie D’Alessandro and Matthew Gale, prove that the craze for Surrealism surged like a prairie fire independently in individuals and groups in some forty-five countries around the world. The tinder was an insurrectionary spirit, disgusted with establishments. Painting and photography dominate, though magazines, texts, and films explore certain scenes. The variety of discoveries, detailed with exceptional scholarship in a ravishing keeper of a catalogue, defeat generalization, with such tonic shocks as “The Sea” (1929), a fantasia by the Japanese Koga Harue that displays, among other things, a bathing beauty, a zeppelin, swimming fish, and a flayed submarine; and “Untitled” (1967), a weaponized throng of human and animal faces and figures, by the Mozambican Malangatana Ngwenya.—*Peter Schjeldahl (metmuseum.org)*

## MUSIC

### Bill Callahan

rock “Shepherd in a Sheepskin Vest,” Bill Callahan’s charming album from 2019, re-introduced this historically aloof singer as a tenderhearted family man, reorienting his perspective without altering the music’s essence or presentation. “Gold Record,” his 2020 follow-up, is less personal. Its head-turning