

ARTFORUM

DECEMBER 2016

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



BEST



OF



2016





Photo: Christopher G. Kennedy, Photo

JACK BANKOWSKY

JACK BANKOWSKY IS A CRITIC AND CURATOR AND ARTFORUM'S EDITOR AT LARGE. HE CURRENTLY ORGANIZES THE SPRING SEMINARS FOR ARTCENTER COLLEGE OF DESIGN, A SERIES THAT BRINGS NOTABLE ARTISTS AND WRITERS TO THE PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, CAMPUS.

7

LAURA OWENS (CCA WATTIS INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS, SAN FRANCISCO; CURATED BY ANTHONY HUBERMAN)

San Francisco, the land of next big things, seems a fitting place to launch the “smart” painting—smart like a smartphone, which we all know can be pretty dumb. Text a question to the enormous, immersive painting (Owens papered, flocked, and painted all four walls of the Wattis’s spacious main gallery), and it answers you back—literally—though the answers can be pretty lame. Stupid/smart is the yin/yang of Owens’s art: She dumbs painting down, subjects it to slapstick, interrogates it, humiliates it, tricks it into showing its hand. Her paintings of painting break down and reassemble the exposed scaffolding of painterly convention until the pictures that emerge start to look like the smartest art around.

