

gesture of communality – with a whiff of cliquishness – sweeping up established along with lesser-known artists, all democratically laid out in alphabetical order.

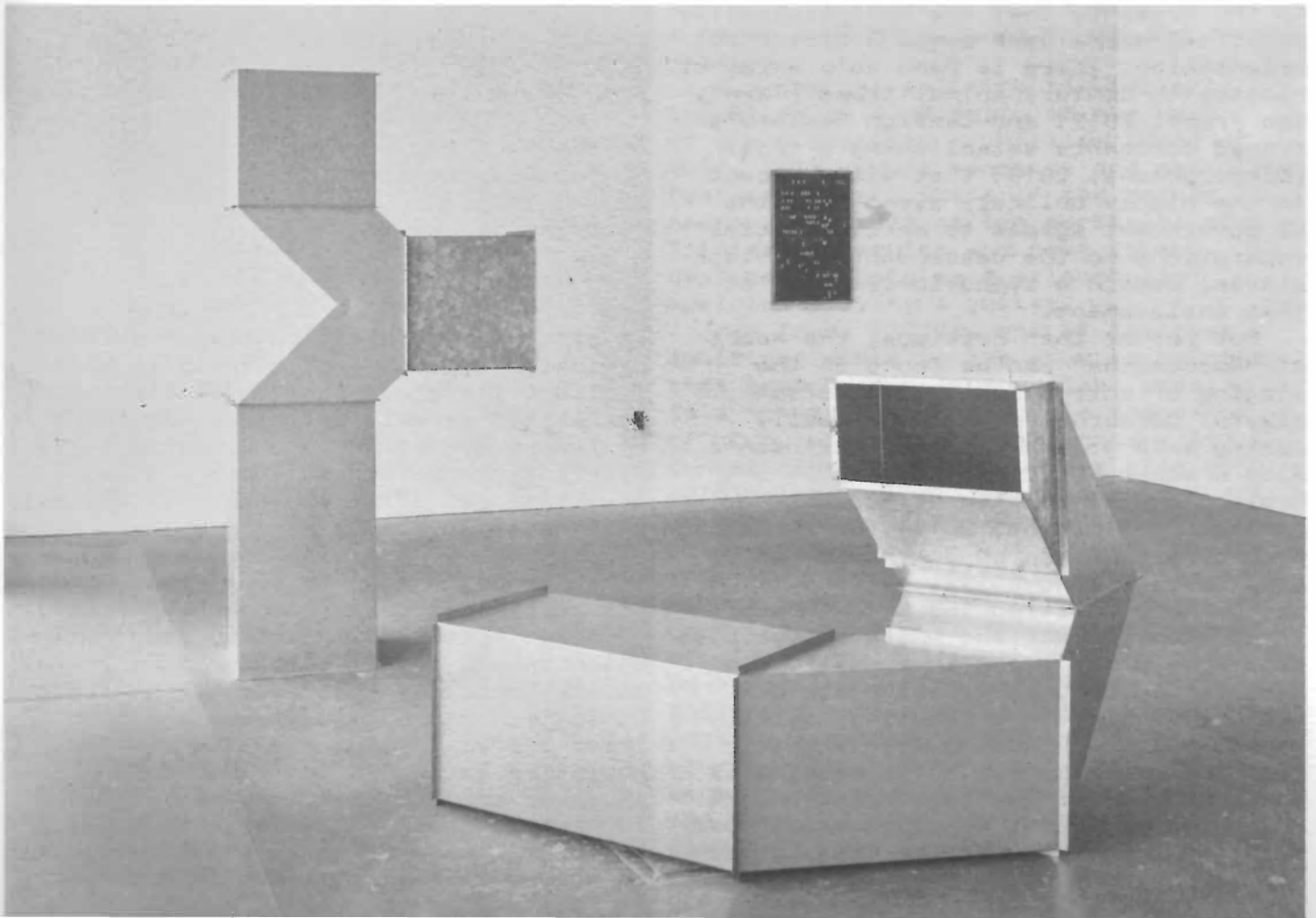
The second room of the exhibition contained eight mirrored steel sculptures, each composed of two interlocking, identical forms and each titled *Woman of Paris* (2017). These curving works recall faces, vases, sometimes molding details, each an associative test for the viewer. Their forms derive from the sets of the eponymous 1923 Charlie Chaplin film. Thin and seemingly flimsy, the sculptures' reflective material created an air of motion.

Lutker's exhibition title, "a.k.a. Public Opinion," hints at the often-contradictory experiences arising out of the mutual contemplation that art still claims to enliven. That an artist may need to arm herself with a large glove – whether to slap away criticism or self-doubt – seems both empowering and oddly defensive. The common thread between both series is animation, or the lack of it: gloves without hands set against inert objects whose mirrored formal quality creates an illusion of motion. The gloves – playful in shape, tasteful in color, laid out almost like wares in a department store – invoke above all the gently romantic notion of the artist's hand, a notion from which springs both indexical portraiture and aggrandizing mythos.

## 5 MECHANISMS

CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco  
By Eli Diner

Absences go a long way toward defining "Mechanisms." As curator Anthony Huberman points out in his catalogue essay, few works in this exhibition on the theme of the machine actually look like machines. And though mostly very recent, fewer still attend to the digital, virtual, and algorithmic apparatuses that both structure our daily lives and obsess our thinking about the current era. The latter sets the show apart from, if not against, the TED Talk worldview and blather on innovation and disruption – itself apparently universal, but particularly resonant in the Bay Area – not to mention the technological sublime associated with the art of the DIS school, which often amounts to little more than deliriously reproducing the look and feel of the digital, marveling at the very fact of these technologies. *Isn't the internet crazy? Bliss is it in this dawn to be alive.* The former absence, on the other hand, marks the distance from antecedents like MoMA's 1968 "The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age": however many decades into the information age we now find ourselves, *the machine* has become so generalized, so internalized, so tiny and vast and multifarious that whatever



it is, it can now only be glimpsed obliquely.

"Mechanisms" accordingly presents a sequence of sideways views: distortions, metaphors, and quirky gestures. Characteristic of the show's approach might be something like Lutz Bacher's *Cyclops* (2017), twenty-six mirror surveillance domes arranged in an irregular pattern across one of the walls in the main gallery. You know these things - what you put up on the ceiling of your 7-Eleven to keep an eye on the shoppers - and it's funny seeing this many of this very specific object - clusters of cyclopes produced cheaply and efficiently somewhere by some machine, in turn producing a groovy kind of effect with their skittering system of convex reflections. In her typically deft and curious repurposing, Bacher asks us as well to reflect on the social machinery of looking and buying, of commerce and art.

More direct in its address of the sociopolitical embeddedness of machines, Pope.L's *Lever* (2016) consists of a drinking fountain covered in a streaky coat of mostly black paint and stuck with gum. It's mounted high on the wall, a segment of piping and a valve jutting down beneath the basin. It winks at Duchamp, of course, but this fountain is an antique from the Jim Crow era, emblem of social control, one-time instrument of state violence. It is probably no coincidence, given the show's emphasis on the difficulty of seeing the machine in the present, that the most explicitly political works here share a historical orientation. There is Danh Vo's array of nineteenth-century animal traps (*Twenty-Two Traps*, 2012) and Cameron Rowland's framed documents establishing a trust (*Disgorgement*, 2016) that will, except in the highly unlikely event that the US government agrees to make financial reparations to the descendants of black slaves, remain a symbolic reminder of that enslavement.

But rather than critique, the heart of "Mechanisms" can be found in the staging of entropy or subtle, often playful *détournement*: the gradually oozing axle grease in Terry Atkinson's *Slat Greaser 5* (2014), Cameron Rowland's disemboweled electrical outlet (*Constituent*, 2014), Garry Neill Kennedy's dismembered lowercase "e" (*The Letter*, 1980-2017). We find in Jay DeFeo's untitled 1987 sequence of forty bleary black-and-white photocopies of a tissue box - one in a small, and necessarily arbitrary, selection of historical works - a haunting, quietly beautiful, and idiosyncratic study in formal permutations. If the machine is an instrument of the wage relation, "a means for producing surplus-value," per Marx, then the abstraction here termed *the mechanism* must be a stand-in for capitalism itself. Dave Beech has argued,

rather persuasively, that art is not fundamentally subsumed to capitalist production, and the eccentric, deadpan, or satirical rerouting of *the logic of the mechanism*, evidenced in these and other works, should be seen as operating in the space of this "economic exceptionalism": neither exactly capitalist nor anti-capitalist, but something a little more angular.



6 TUNGA  
The Body in Works

MASP, São Paulo  
By Tobi Maier

As part of an exhibition season at MASP dedicated to themes of sexuality, which included the group show "Histories of Sexuality" as well as solo exhibitions by Tracey Moffat and the Guerilla Girls, "The Body in Works" is Tunga's first institutional offering after his untimely passing in 2016. His work has inspired generations of Brazilian artists, not least since he rose to prominence with his participation in Documenta X (1997).

Seven freestanding walls, four of which form a cross, correspond to the square layout of the lower-ground-floor exhibition space. The show opens with *Three Scenes* (1999), a pastel drawing depicting three men and five women involved in sexual intercourse.

Next is *Exogenous Axis* (1985-2000), an installation of three phallic objects, in wood and brass that recall Brancusi sculptures. These are accompanied by