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an arts column by kathleen macqueen

FALL VARIATIONS: SHOWS BY WOMEN ARTISTS

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Art critic Deborah Solomon announced on WNYC recently that canonical white male artists were prominent on the scene this fall in New York’s major museums – Chris Burden at the New Museum, Robert Motherwell and Christopher Wool at the Guggenheim, Robert Indiana at the Whitney, Magritte at MoMA, and Mike Kelley at P.S. 1/MoMA – but these exhibitions don’t occlude the presence of some outstanding women artists in installations scattered throughout the city. Here’s a short list:



A.K. Burns, *Ending with a Fugue*, 2013, installation view. Courtesy the artist and Callicoon Fine Arts, NY.

• **A.K. Burns**, *Ending with a Fugue*, **Callicoon Fine Arts, LES, thru October 27**

A.K. Burns has a similar versatility toward mediums as Carol Bove but less in terms of relations and more in the sense of “by any means necessary” (this was honestly my assessment before I knew of her 2012 work of this title). Burns works in sculpture, video, collage, and social performance and, while her five-channel video was one of the outstanding selections for the recent ICP Photography Triennial “A Different Kind of Order,” her exhibition at Callicoon gives a greater sense of her breadth of practice and vision. She asserts “the personal is not only political, but sexual” and her new video work documents the New York Botanical Garden’s annual orchid show through the photographic view of spectators – the clichés of beauty and fertility distended in the bi-sexual shapes of the orchid. She also contends both through activism and art with the relationship of the artist to the wage economy. Here castoff work shirts and sweaters are

immortalized in cast aluminum while two megaliths (also foundry productions) become ironic memorial stele to the sedimentary fusion of sand, shoe, and spice – a sensory reminder of the economy of catastrophe and the pressures of existence, both in physical and metaphysical sensibility.