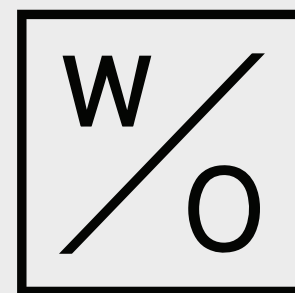


art
without
intent

THE FOUND OBJECT SHOW





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without
intent


THE FOUND OBJECT SHOW

*An exhibition of found objects transcending
their forms through time and circumstance.*

MARCH 24-27 | 2022

2 RIVINGTON ST | NYC

@artwithoutintent | www.artwithoutintent.com



Found Object Show exhibitors each approach the concept of art without intent from different perspectives, their items reflecting their own unique dialogues with the material past.

Taking the form of a gallery exhibition, the 2022 show features a group of nine exhibitors: Aarne Anton, Ben Alucker, Kevin Duffy, Adam Irish, Joshua Lowenfels, Eric Oglander, Steven S. Powers, Susan Wechsler, and Janet West.

With this initial event and catalog, we hope to set the foundation for a larger annual show dedicated to the found object, open to a broad spectrum of exhibitors and material.

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without + within

by Adam Irish

To learn the nature of found objects, we should go hunting with my grandfather.

Clad in buffalo plaid with shotgun in hand, Grandpa Bowen had eyes sharpened as much for deer as for the overgrown cellar holes hidden in the New Hampshire woods. Sometimes he pulled things he liked from the forgotten ruins, and, as though they were ten-point bucks, he'd drag his rusty and broken quarry back through the wilderness to his truck.

As a boy in my grandparents' garden, I sat in awe of the rusty iron cogwheels from ancient and nameless machines transplanted from backwoods oblivion. Rising from the tiger lillies, their whirlpool spokes followed buried orbits, undeterred by the wonder-struck child trying to turn their gripless handles. I could not alter their trajectories, and although my grandfather himself retrieved those rusted relics from the woods, neither could he. The inanimate iron spun on without us but also within us—as found objects with the same transformative power as art.

The found object is a thing *without*—without context, without category, without explanation, without creator, and without a readymade definition.

Since I befriended Josh Lowenfels nearly a decade ago and we mused about how great it would be to have a show dedicated to extraordinary found objects, I've struggled to articulate what they are. Over the years I've had the good fortune to see the found object anew through the insightful eyes of the others in this exhibition, several of whom have championed the found object for decades. These relationships have both deepened my awareness of its potential and also my inability to write anything intelligible about the found object.

Thousands of words later, I still can't do it.

I've written about digging in dumps, the art instinct, pareidolia, Surrealism, hetero-topic intrusions in the paradigm, rocks shaped like skulls prized by cavemen, synesthesia, the short-circuiting of Saussure's signified and signifier, the as-yet undiscovered sensory perception of dimples in space-time, the irrelevant shark in a formaldehyde tank, and the birth of metaphor in the Upper Paleolithic. But no matter how much ink I displace on de-contextualization and defamiliarization, the found object still eludes my pen.

And I'm glad. The found object thwarts language, but language also thwarts the found object. Its unnameable magic would fade if held fully captive on a page.

As a phenomenon as old as human consciousness itself, the recognition of a found object triggers a wordless, intuitive, even involuntary aesthetic and conceptual response within the mind of its discoverer—what we call “art without intent.” While it may be something found in nature, man-made things transformed without a human hand seem to be the most potent variety of found objects (and are therefore the subject of this exhibition). This is not to draw boundaries, however—art without intent manifests within each of us, an experience as unique as it is universal.

And yet almost every academic discussion on the topic is restricted to the confines of an upside-down modern urinal.

The name “Marcel Duchamp” would not have meant anything to my grandfather nor to me as a six year old boy. Nor would it have meant anything to MNP.

Ten years before Duchamp forged an ironic signature in order to appropriate a piece of porcelain, MNP embroidered his or her initials on a piece of luminous silk to celebrate a transcendental encounter with an ordinary old copper button.

“THIS COPPER BUTTON IS MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD,” proclaims MNP in painstaking stitches, as if not describing a button, but sharing a miraculous revelation.

To those sensitive to found objects, even an unremarkable antique button—a thing at once familiar and foreign, palpable in one's hand but coexisting in another temporal world as real as our own—may detonate within the mind's eye, radiating shockwaves of

aesthetic and conceptual impressions, leaving one left shell-shocked and marveling within a crater of wonder.

With pinking shears in hand, MNP reified that crater in vibrant color and varied texture, memorializing the found object's impact as a pen wipe in layers of fabric cut from ancient cotillion dresses and bedspreads—some as old and otherworldly as the button itself.

One hundred and fifteen years later, I came upon this material genuflection to a numinous button—a *found-object found object!*—and then I found myself, quite suddenly and without volition, beside MNP within that crater of wonder: the epicenter of our imagination and the flashpoint of human creativity.

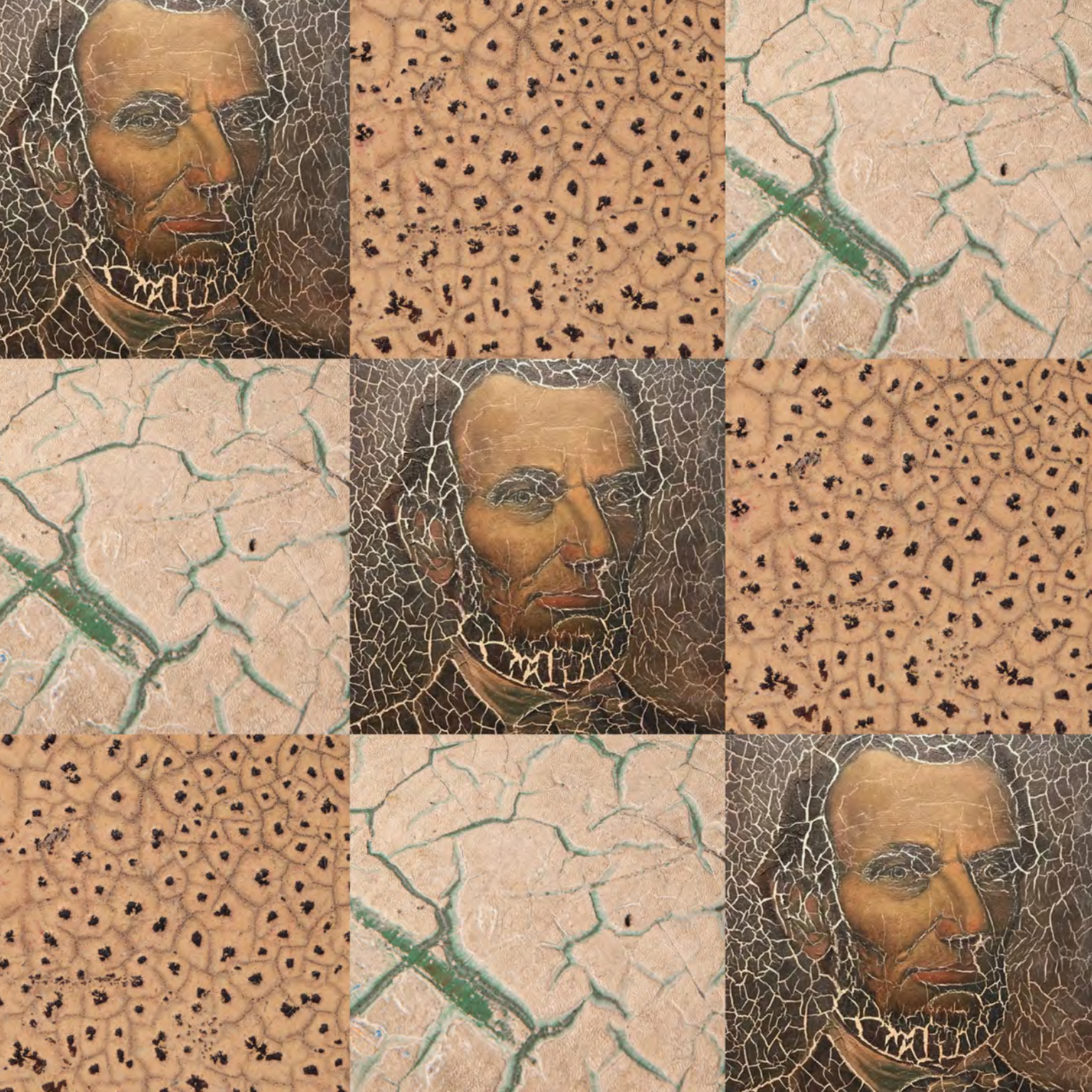
Consider the Found Object Show as an invitation to join us there.

*Adam Irish is an antiques dealer with a gallery dedicated to found objects
in Providence, Rhode Island.*

Old as Adam Antiques & Americana

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transformers

shape-shifting & wonderment

by John Foster

As someone with a longstanding interest in found objects, I have numerous pieces in my personal collection similar to those offered here in this exhibition. One is a painting of Abraham Lincoln that I purchased from Joshua Lowenfels more than ten years ago.

The anonymous painting — as it was originally made in the 1930s — was a perfectly average depiction of our Civil War president. But with the passing of time and with circumstances unknown, something unintended and accidental happened to the surface of the work. The painting developed a network of bold cracks in the paint, occurring almost everywhere on the surface but the face. This craquelure, as it is called, metamorphosed this “average” ninety-year old artwork into something quite striking! While an art conservator might say that the cracks were caused over time by shrinkage of the paint film or varnish, perhaps it was years of storage in a hot attic that caused the rather surrealist result. Whatever the cause, the transformation gave this artwork a new life. To date, this painting of Lincoln, cracks and all, has been exhibited in several museum exhibitions featuring found objects in which I have taken part.

As we all know, the passing of time affects everything, and with that the never-ending forces of decay play their part. While antiques dealers have always highly valued surface wear and patina when evaluating a piece, many objects in this exhibition will at times set this notion on its ear. Challenging accepted norms is, after all, one of the very things we ask of art making and curation.

Art collector and dealer **Aarne Anton** of Pomona, New York mounts a dramatically rusted bicycle seat on a contemporary base, suggesting that of an anthropomorphic horned animal. In so doing, Anton celebrates the ravages of rust, which turned the seat into some-

thing else altogether.

Antiques dealer **Ben Albucker** of Lambertville, New Jersey presents an armless decayed female doll, standing upright with all the wounds of time, gloriously on full display. Additionally, Albucker's display of an old softball is in such a state of timeworn transformation you might think you are looking at a specimen from the plant world.

Collector and dealer **Kevin Duffy** of Atlanta, Georgia presents two nineteenth-century school writing slates on which their owner inscribed lines to mimic ruled paper. At some point in the journey from then to now, its slate had cracked vertically, creating a point/counterpoint to the horizontally man-made lines. Here, a once simple utilitarian object had transformed into a modernist curiosity of exquisite and sublime beauty.

Antiques dealer **Adam Irish** of Providence, Rhode Island presents a hand-painted street sign cut down to form a shelf, now by chance reading "ALONE AVE" — a piece possessing the irony and poignancy of the neo-conceptual artist Jenny Holzer. Andy Warhol would have approved of his vintage homemade child's Halloween costume, rendered with paint into a pack of Marlboro cigarettes.

Manhattan art dealer **Josh Lowenfels** offers a nineteenth-century wooden bicycle wheel contraption that surely had at one time a particular purpose, but now offers confounding overtones of surrealist Marcel Duchamp. Additionally, his early twentieth-century handsaw remains in its homemade case wrapped with twine and tape, evoking Claus Oldenburg on his best day.

New York artist **Eric Oglander** (of @craigslist_mirrors fame) is also a collector and dealer of sublime, esoteric objects. His staple-repaired china plate has a Frankenstein-ish look to it, an attempt by a restorer to save this beautiful object at all costs. Oglander's found mannequin head — mounted on a stand with the word "DESIRE" imprinted below it — is a thing of beauty.

New York art and antiques dealer **Steven Powers** has long championed the merits of art as both found and in continuous states of transfiguration. His 1920s "Kewpie" doll has undergone a transformation from hell — her bare pink skin flaking some insult of nature

and abuse. Nonetheless, her staring eyes are as bright as ever, her smile still beaming as if no outside force could disturb her spirit. In the same spirit, Powers also presents a vintage Polaroid photo with such decay it has become something else altogether — something rare and special. Had this metamorphosis of forces not taken place, it likely would have been overlooked — forgotten in some attic or storage bin.

Art and antiques dealer **Susan Wechsler** of Stanfordville, New York, showcases objects with strong graphics, bold colors, and wit. In this exhibition she displays a vintage homemade Chinese Checkers board whose six-pointed star shape is not only askew within the square board (charming!) but has a seriously weathered surface. Unlike most colorful and meticulous handmade game boards of yesteryear, this colorless and roughly painted board is a street urchin of the genre. Never meant originally to be displayed as art, the hard-working life of this game board is now frozen in time, no longer having to concern itself with spilled drinks or cigarette ash to affect it. Its life as an art object is well underway.

Collector and dealer **Janet West** of White Plains, NY — a beloved antiques vendor at the New York flea market — shows a tray of old decayed rubber balls. Now crusty and cracked, they look as if they were retrieved from a lake. Likewise, she shows an alligatorated tin coin bank with a mottled surface blessed by time.

The "Art Without Intent" exhibitors deliberately omit descriptions and captions on these photographs so the viewer can experience the objects subjectively (they are, however, described in the back). If you are fortunate to see this exhibit in person, come prepared to open your eyes.

John Foster is an artist, writer, curator, and collector of vernacular photography and outsider art. In 2012, he co-curated the exhibition "Art Without Artists" with Roger Manley at the Gregg Museum of Art and Design at N.C. State University in Raleigh, North Carolina.

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@accidentalmystery

ART WITHOUT INTENT

AARNE ANTON





ART WITHOUT INTENT



ANTON



ART WITHOUT INTENT



ANTON







ANTON





ART WITHOUT INTENT



ANTON



ART WITHOUT INTENT

ALBUCKER

BEN ALBUCKER









ALBUCKER





ART WITHOUT INTENT



ALBUCKER

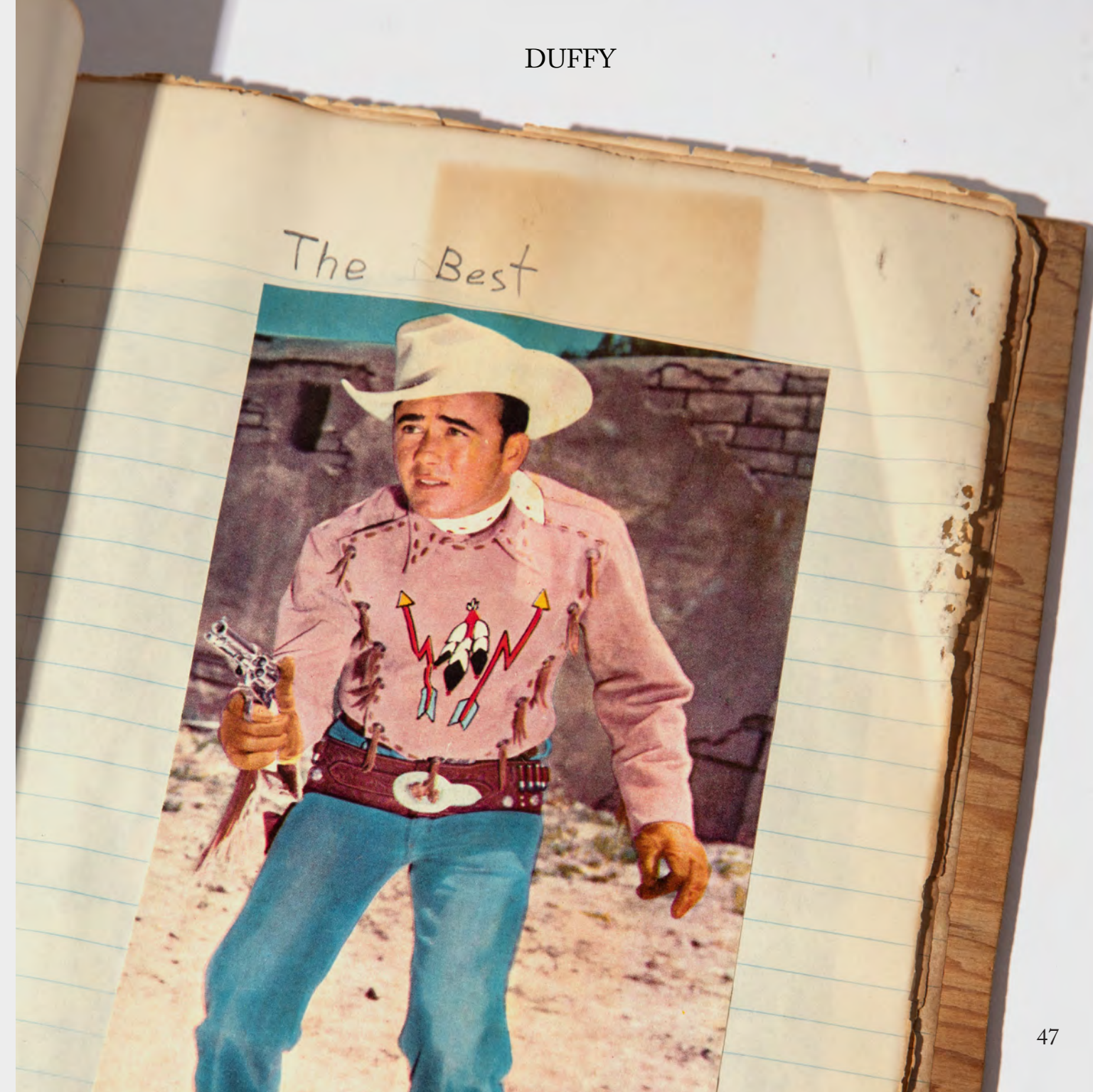


ART WITHOUT INTENT

KEVIN DUFFY













ADAM IRISH







ART WITHOUT INTENT



IRISH





ART WITHOUT INTENT



IRISH







ART WITHOUT INTENT

JOSHUA LOWENFELS













LOWENFELS



ART WITHOUT INTENT



LOWENFELS



ART WITHOUT INTENT

ERIC OGLANDER



ART WITHOUT INTENT



OGLANDER



ART WITHOUT INTENT



OGLANDER



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OGLANDER



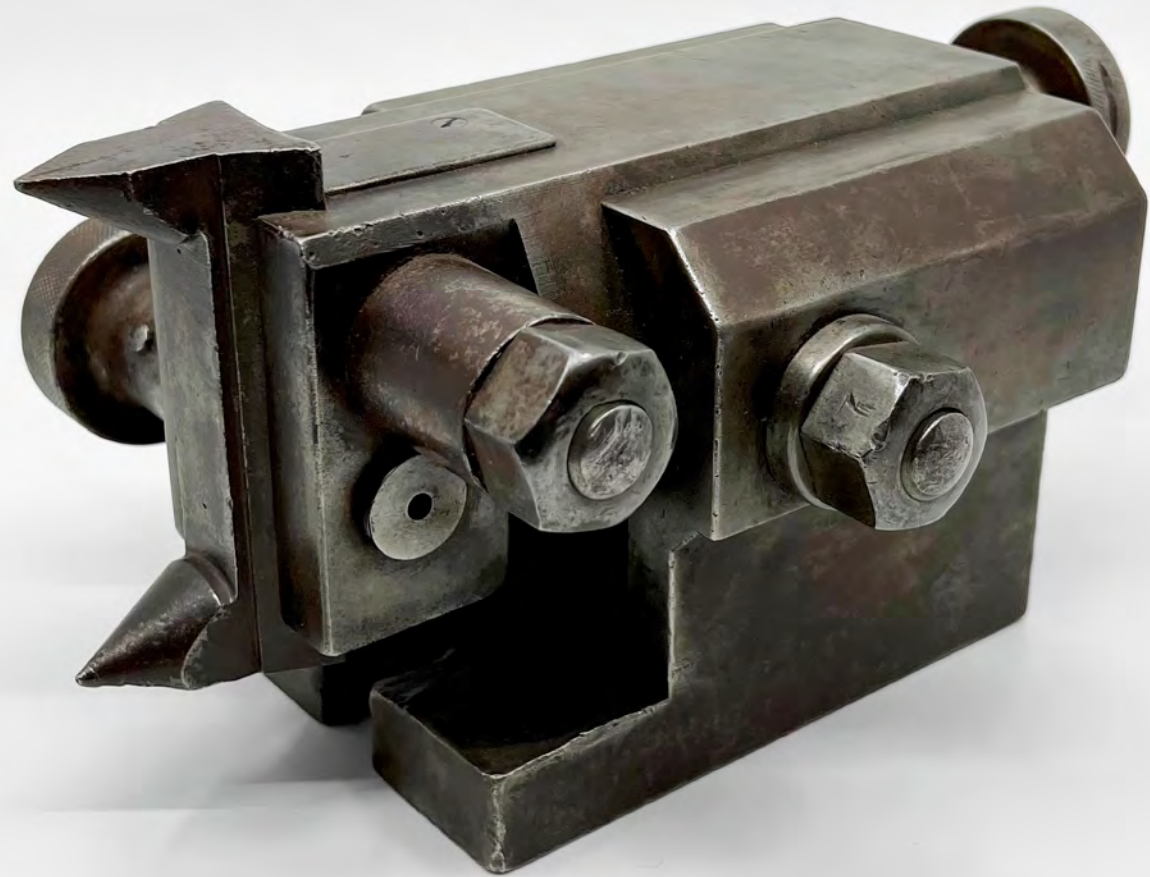


ART WITHOUT INTENT

STEVEN POWERS



ART WITHOUT INTENT



POWERS





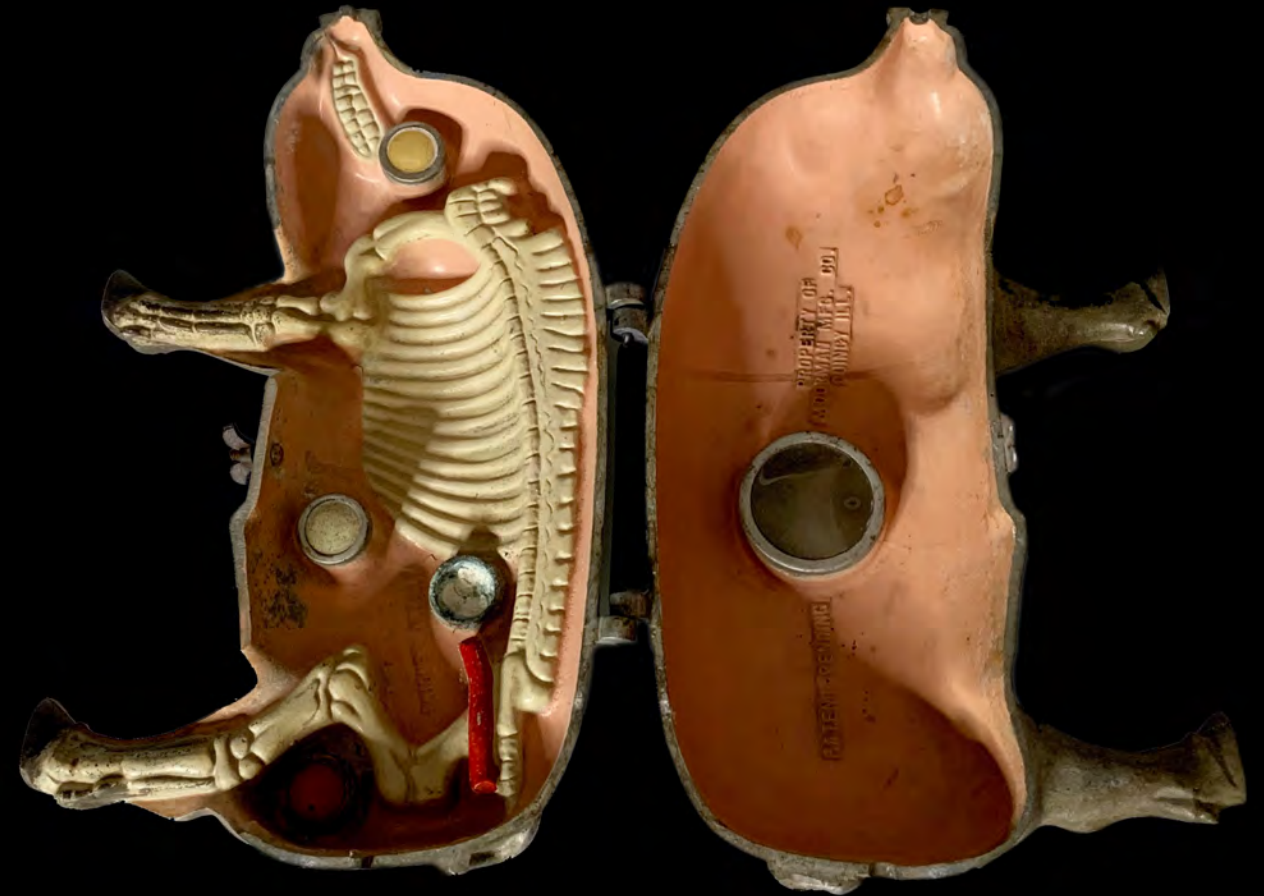


ART WITHOUT INTENT



POWERS







ART WITHOUT INTENT

SUSAN WECHSLER







WECHSLER











ART WITHOUT INTENT

JANET WEST









WEST





WEST



SCULPTOGRAPH

(Patent Applied For)

the Great Eastern Art Co.
50 CLINTON PLACE, NEAR FIFTH AVE. NEW YORK.



WEST



INVENTORY

*The objects depicted in this catalog are available for sale.
Please contact the exhibitor indicated below for more information.*

<i>page no.</i>	<i>description</i>	<i>measurements</i>
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AARNE ANTON

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14	Metal hands washing machine agitator, on mount, c. 1930s	width 13, height 7 inches
15	Group of petrified rubber pocket watches, c. 1940s (designed to squirt water at people asking "What time is it?")	height 2.5, width 1.75 inches
16	Cast iron well rope case, on mount, c. 1890s	width 12, height 7, depth 10 inches
17	Soapstone bed warming stone in wooden case with holes, c. 19th century	length 10.5, width 7.5, depth 2.5 inches
18	Wooden drain board, c. 19th century	length 25, width 15, depth 1.5 inches
19	Hinged wooden panels from a sheep farm, c. early 20th century	height 60, width 40, .75 inches
20	Iron arm "come-along" extension for moving hay bales, on mount, c. late 19th century	length 42 inches
21	Wood and iron bicycle seat, on mount, c. 19th century	length 13, width 6, height 6 inches

22	Excavated iron bicycle seat encrusted with melted glass, on mount, c. mid-20th century	length 10.5, width 8.5, depth 3.5 inches
24	Group of balloon manufacturing metal forms, on wood mount, c. 1950s	height 16, width 31 inches
26	Pair of metal bird-like handles, on mounts, c. late 19th century	height 7, length 6.5, depth 3 inches
27	Painted wooden birdhouse panel, on mount, c. 1940s-50s	height 16, width 11, depth 1.5 inches

BEN ALBUCKER

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30	Altered eyeglass magnifiers, c. 1930s	height 1.25, width 4.5, depth 3.25 inches
31	Mossy softball, 20th century	diameter 3.5 inches
32	Pair of copper orbs trade sign from a bank, Texas, c. late 19th century	width 8, depth 9.5 inches
33	Fence wire from pasture with wrapped wool deposit from escaping sheep, 20th century	length 7 feet
34	Worn-down taxidermy deer hoof hat rack, c. early 20th century	length 32, height 7, depth 6 inches
35	Large styrofoam block found in river, 20th century	length 36, width 25 inches
37	Painted birds with glued feathers, c. late 19th century	length 22, width 14 inches
38	Plaster leg fragment, c. mid-20th century	height 5.5, width 1.75, length 5.5 inches

ART WITHOUT INTENT

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| 39 | Miniature store display mannequin, c. 1940s | height 13.5, width 2, depth 2 inches |
| 40 | Tongue serving dish, c. late 19th century | height 1.5, width 10.5 inches |
| 41 | Canned white bread, c. 1950s | width 3, depth 2 inches |

KEVIN DUFFY

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- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 44 | Scorched board, on mount, c. 19th-20th century | width 11.5 inches |
| 45 | Shoe shine box, c. early 20th century | length 11, width 7, height 6 inches |
| 46 | TV Westerns scrapbook, c. 1950s | length 10.5, width 9 inches |
| 48 | Tar bucket, c. 19th century | height 13, width 12, diameter of opening 8 inches |
| 49 | Set of 33 wooden exercise clubs, c. late 19th century | height 28, width 10 inches |
| 50 | Pair of student school slates, c. 19th century | height 12, width 8 inches |
| 51 | Ploughshare, Long Island, NY, c. 19th century | length 16, width 4 inches |
| 52 | Toy mold, c. mid-20th century | height 8.5, width 4, depth 3.5 inches |
| 53 | Eraser box, c. mid-20th century | length 5, width 2.25, depth 1.25 inches |

INVENTORY

ADAM IRISH

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|----|--|--|
| 4 | Embroidered pen wipe composed of early copper button and layers of fabric, dated 1907 | diameter 4.75 inches |
| 56 | Custom traveling case for stereopticon viewers, c. late 19th century | length 25, height 15, depth 4.5 inches |
| 57 | Skeletal clockwork automaton fragment likely from a store window, on mount, c. late 19th century | height 13, width 10, depth 6 inches |
| 58 | “Alone Ave” cut-down street sign repurposed as shelf, c. early 20th century | length 24, height 5.5 inches |
| 59 | Hot pink clip-on bow tie with braile label, c. 1950s | length 7.5, width 4.5 inches |
| 60 | Feature matchbook depicting tennis match, c. 1960s | length 2, width 1.5 inches |
| 61 | Marlboro cigarette pack child’s Halloween costume, c. 1960s | height 23, width 14, depth 7 inches |
| 62 | Makeshift hat stretcher, on mount, c. 19th century (ex Peter Brams) | height 9, length 12, width 6.5 inches |
| 63 | Chicken rustler’s bobcat track shoes, c. 19th century | length 18, width 4, 2.75 height |
| 64 | Beach-combed denture fragments worn smooth by the sea, c. 20th century | length of largest 1 inch |
| 65 | Bridal shower gift spatula wrapped in silk, c. 1920s | length 11, width 3 inches |
| 66 | United Christian Missionary Society globe-form donation bank, c. early 20th century | height 8, width 6 inches |
| 68 | Polychrome silk duster, c. late 19th century | length 18.5, width 10 inches |
| 69 | Crumb sweeper brush in the form of a woman, c. late 19th century | height 9.5, width 5 inches |

ART WITHOUT INTENT

JOSHUA LOWENFELS

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|----|---|---|
| 72 | Coin-activated device of unknown purpose, c. early 20th century | height 20, width 6.5, depth 6 inches |
| 73 | Grinder made from bicycle wheel, c. late 19th century | height 41, width 25, depth 19 inches |
| 75 | Grain sifter, wood and animal skin, c. early 19th century | diameter 20, depth 4 inches |
| 76 | Homemade electrified toilet seat, in frame, c. mid-20th century | length 18, width 14 inches |
| 77 | Saw with homemade carrying case, c. early 20th century | length 31, height 7 inches |
| 78 | Collapsed diving helmet damaged from water pressure at great depth, on mount, c. early 20th century | height 11, width 10 inches |
| 79 | Masonry brush, c. late 19th century | length 13, width 5, height 5.5 inches |
| 81 | Trunk of animal skulls as found, upstate NY, c. late 19th century | length 20, height 18.5, width 15.5 inches |
| 82 | Homemade golf club with mirror, c. mid-20th century | |
| 83 | Petrified loaf of cheese in rawhide pouch, c. late 18th-early 19th century | height 12, length 11, depth 6.5 inches |

ERIC OGLANDER

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|----|---|----------------------------|
| 86 | Homemade barbells made from cement-filled coffee cans, c. 1930s | length 22, height 5 inches |
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INVENTORY

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| 87 | Chained wagon-wheel parking brakes, c. 19th century | length 8.5, width 5.5, height 4.5 inches |
| 88 | Human hair false beard theatrical costume, c. 19th century | length 10 inches |
| 89 | “Desire” store display mannequin head, c. 1930s | height 14, width 7, depth 8.5 inches |
| 91 | Handmade wooden box with mirror lid, c. 19th century | height 6, width 5.5, depth 5 inches |
| 92 | Staple-repaired plate, Spode, England, c. early 19th century | width 5.5, depth 1.25 |
| 93 | Bottle melted in fire, c. late 19th century | height 15, width 3.5 inches |
| 94 | Brick with animal paw print, c. 19th century | length 8.25, width 3.75, depth 2.5 inches |
| 95 | Fire-starter board with record of campfires, dated 1966 | length 13, width 3.5, depth 1 inch |
| 96 | Cut-down hand saw, c. early 20th century | length 15.5, height 4.5, depth 1.25 inches |
| 97 | Brass doll head with paint worn away from handling, c. early 20th century | height 5.25, width 3.75, depth 2.75 |

STEVEN S. POWERS

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- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 100 | Industrial steel jig, c. early 20th century | length 9.5, width 6.25, height 4.5 inches |
| 101 | Kewpie doll, c. 1920s-30s | height 10.5, width 8.5, depth 3 inches |
| 103 | Painter’s palette with raised perimeter of encrusted layers of oil paint, c. early or mid-20th century | length 27, width 18, height 2.6 inches |
| 105 | Desiccated Polaroid photo, c. 1970s | 10.75 x 10.75 inches framed |

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- 106 Eggs hunting decoy, c. early 20th century diameter 6, height 2.5 inches (as set)
- 107 Colt factory gunsights cluster, c. late 19th century height 6, width 5, depth 4.75 inches
- 108 Salesman sample pig feed model, c. 1924 length 15, depth 5, height 10.5 inches
- 110 Plumb bob, c. mid- or late 19th century height 29.5, width 3, depth .5 inches
- 111 Barbed wire with woody growth, c. mid-20th century height 13, width 10, depth 4 inches

SUSAN WECHSLER

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- 114 Massage rollers, on mount, c. early 20th century length 13.5, width 8.5, depth 2.25 inches
- 115 “Slipknot” heel advertising display, Plymouth Rubber Co., Canton, MA, c. pre-1920 height 17, width 14.5, depth 1 inches
- 117 Handmade hardware storage bin, c. 1940s height 16, width 14.75, 5.5 depth inches
- 118 Chinese checkers game board, c. early 20th century height 17, width 16.5 inches
- 119 Fairgrounds primitive game wheel, PA, c. 1930s height 35, width 30.5 inches
- 121 Factory gloves, on mounts, c. 20th century length 12.5, width 9 inches
- 122 “Cut Rate Always” double-sided painted wooden sign, c. early 20th century. height 22.5, width 16 inches
- 123 Pair of braille educational boards, c. 20th century length 10.5, width 7.25 inches

INVENTORY

- 124 Industrial mold, c. late 19th-early 20th century height 4.75, width 5.5, depth 5.5 inches
- 125 Pair of architectural iron vent forms, c. late 19th-early 20th century diameter 18, depth 3.5 inches

JANET WEST

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- 128 Shrunken portrait of a man on celluloid, c. 1920s height 4.5, width 3.25 inches
- 129 Three flattened rubber toy animals, c. 1930s length 10 inches
- 130 Painted tin bank with aged “alligator” surface, c. late 19th century height 4 inches, width 3.25, depth 2 inches
- 131 Magician’s ball, metal spring and fabric, c. early 20th century diameter 3.5 inches
- 133 Mended silk shirt, c. 1950s size large
- 134 Petrified rubber balls, c. late 19th-20th centuries diameter 3 inches
- 135 Handmade aluminum and fluorescent satin directionals, c. mid-20th century length 21, width 11.5, depth 4 inches
- 137 Decayed “Sculptograph” three-dimensional portrait of a man, c. late 19th century height 19, width 15 inches
- 138 Make-do sewing box of thread, c. early 20th century length 13, height 5, depth 8 inches
- 141 Chair with layers of aged “alligator” paint, c. 1930s height 34, depth 17, width 17 inches



photography by

MAURISA MACKEY

*catalog designed
& edited by*

ADAM IRISH



