

## KRYSTEN CUNNINGHAM

Born 1973 in New Haven, CT  
Lives and works in Los Angeles  
(West Adams)

**Education**

MFA, sculpture, University of California,  
Los Angeles, 2003

**Selected Exhibitions**

2010

Thomas Solomon Gallery, Los Angeles (solo)  
*Undone: Making and Unmaking in Contemporary Sculpture*, Henry Moore Institute,  
Leeds, UK

2009

Dispatch, New York (solo)

2008

Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany (solo)  
*Beyond Measure*, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge,  
UK

2006

Ritter/Zamet, London (solo)

2005

*Thing: New Sculpture from Los Angeles*,  
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

**Selected Bibliography**

"Conversation between Claire Barclay and  
Krysten Cunningham." In *Undone: Making  
and Unmaking in Contemporary Sculpture*.  
Leeds, UK: Henry Moore Institute, 2010.

Miles, Christopher. "Krysten Cunningham:  
Thomas Solomon Gallery." *Artforum* 47  
(March 2009): 252–53.

Rosenberg, Karen. "Krysten Cunningham:  
Tangential." *New York Times*, November 27,  
2009.

In Krysten Cunningham's practice the relationship between ideas and forms is reciprocal: preconceived ideas and work plans generate studio activity, but formal experiments are also allowed to suggestively generate impressively far-flung ideas. In 2004, having just finished graduate school, at a moment when most serious sculptors of her generation were pursuing some fusion of late modernism and pop art, Cunningham turned about and set sail for a world of handicrafts, pattern, and play. Her first works in this vein take the well-known *ojo de dios* (God's eye) motif of colored concentric squares, traditionally woven by the Huichol Indians, and spin it out into three dimensions. Planes of wrapped yarn occupy the faces of polyhedra, in turn structured by metal rods. The facture of the early pieces is transparent in the high modernist tradition: the viewer sees (or thinks he sees!) exactly how the piece was constructed. With the *God's Eyes*, Cunningham came up with an ingenious, radiantly simple solution to some of modernism's most well-worn binaries: hard/soft, armature/facade, inside/outside, object/support. The shadowy inside spaces of the sculptures, glimpsed through narrow breaks in the weave and at the edges of each design's faces, posit a subverted interior world, one that the viewer is nevertheless unmistakably beckoned to enter.

Found throughout Huichol temples, *ojos de dios* are regarded as shamanistic portals, places through which humans and the deity can perceive each other. Cunningham's relationship to this highly specific tradition, long since commercialized in Huichol yarn paintings for the tourist trade, is not simple. She is obviously no Huichol—indeed the average American is more likely to encounter a God's-eye form in a kindergarten classroom than on a Mexican mountaintop. Nevertheless these sculptures unmistakably resonate with the ancient modalities of sacred geometry and pose vexed but urgent questions about the spiritual meanings and utopian possibilities of geometric abstract art today.

The breakthrough video *Hypercube* (2006) introduced another layer of cultural reference to this geometric domain, that of the fourth dimension. In the film, an unseen narrator (voiced by Cunningham) introduces the concept of the hypercube, a theoretical solid that exists in a fourth spatial dimension. Just as a square can be seen as a two-dimensional representation of a cube, so, it is observed,

a cube can be seen as a three-dimensional representation of a hypercube. The animated image track, which shows rotating hypercubes seen first orthogonally and then in perspective, bears a striking resemblance to the box-kite forms of Cunningham's earlier sculptures. The notion that there exists a spatial dimension that is invisible to us is then used as a springboard for psycho-philosophical speculations on the nature of knowledge, existence, and the body. (The bulk of the material in the film is appropriated: the spoken text is taken from the book *The Fourth Dimension* [1922] by the Russian esoteric philosopher P. D. Ouspensky, and the stunning vector-graphics animations are from an award-winning 1978 film by the mathematicians Thomas Banchoff and Charles Strauss.) *Hypercube* mobilizes the arcane (and, it must be said, archaic) literature on the fourth dimension to produce an ethereal mood of transparency. The video slyly frames the sculptures, proposing an extraspatial model for their physical origin, as if they had been deposited from a higher, invisible plane.

In Cunningham's most recent work, occasioned by the C.O.L.A. exhibition, yarn and thread become their own autonomous support, loosely woven on a handloom into textiles. Displaying simple bands of color, these coarse fabrics reveal the structure of their warp and weft in explicit detail. The weavings are draped or pinned onto vertical metal rods, in turn stationed on floor supports that variously allude to desert architecture, garden follies, and theatrical sets. The expanded human scale of these works can be seen as an evolution of Cunningham's previous sculpture but also draws from her ongoing experiments with performance, video, and theater. Literal space dividers, the sculptures engage the relationship between viewer and object but also that between viewer and viewer. While they unquestionably hark back to the history of minimalism and the famous question of its theatricality, their material thinness and transparency stand in sharp contrast to the heavy industrial materials associated with that movement. The works raise familiar but unsettled questions about weaving as a metaphor and about the gendering of facture, process, materials, and space itself.

Benjamin Lord



KRYSTEN CUNNINGHAM



22 *Stone and Tapestry*, 2012–13; cotton, silk, wool, dye, steel, silver, cement, stone, wood; 84 x 60 x 24 inches

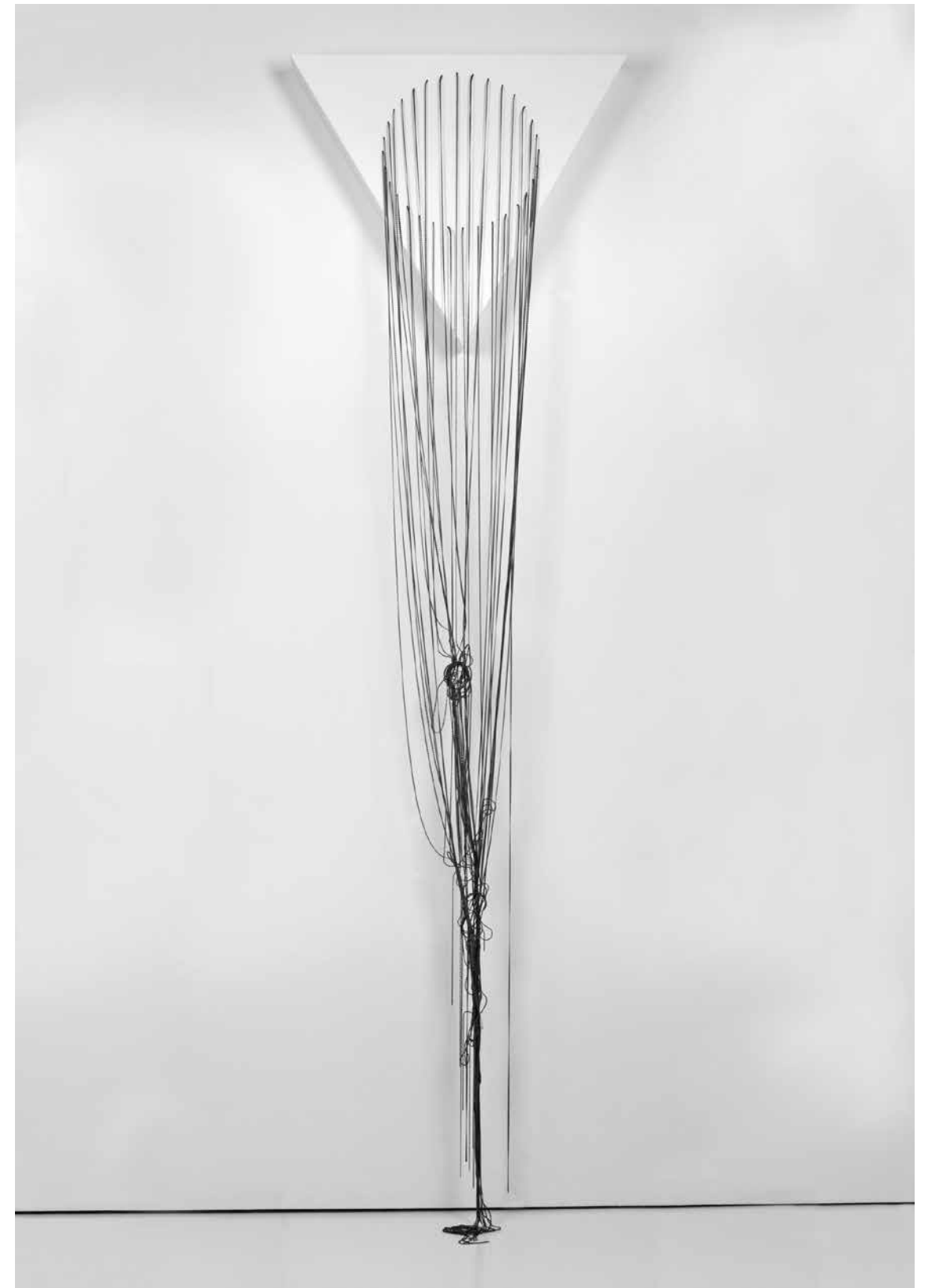


23 *Stone and Tapestry*, 2012–13; cotton, silk, wool, dye, steel, silver, cement, stone, wood; 84 x 60 x 24 inches





*Triangle and Chains*, 2012; medium-density fiberboard, paint, brass chain, spray paint; 76 x 22 x 5 inches



*Circle and Chains*, 2012; wood, chain, spray paint; 77 x 22 x 5 inches

## WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

## Visual Artists

LISA ANNE AUERBACH

*American Megazine #1*, 2013  
24-page megazine  
60 x 39 inches (page size)

*American Megazine #1 (cover)*, 2013  
60 x 39 inches

*American Megazine #1 (inside spread)*,  
2013, 60 x 78 inches

KRYSTEN CUNNINGHAM

*Circle and Chains*, 2012  
Wood, chain, spray paint  
77 x 22 x 5 inches

*Filigree*, 2012  
Cotton, steel, paint, brass wire  
49 x 18 x 3/4 inches

*Gold Talus*, 2012  
Cotton, polyester, acrylic polymer  
38 x 26 x 4 inches

*Partial Fold*, 2012  
Linen, wool, dye, polyvinyl acetate  
39 x 19 x 7 inches

*Triangle and Chains*, 2012  
Medium-density fiberboard, paint,  
brass chain, spray paint  
76 x 22 x 5 inches

*Desert Landscape*, 2012–13  
Cotton, silk, wool, dye, steel, silver,  
cement, stone, wood, wooden supports  
84 x 60 x 24 inches

*Double Cross*, 2012–13 (work in progress)  
Steel, spray paint, wool, linen, dye,  
urethane, 91 x 70 x 80 inches (approx.)

*Plaster X*, 2012–13  
Wood, cardboard, paint, plaster, jute  
68 x 29 x 29 inches

*World Line*, 2012–13  
Plaster, cardboard, jute, steel, paint  
77 x 70 x 30 inches

*For a Theater of Broken Forms*, 2013  
Steel, wood, spray paint  
72 x 30 x 16 inches

*For a Theater of Dotted Lines*, 2013  
Steel, wood, spray-paint, dye  
72 x 30 x 10 inches

RAMIRO DIAZ-GRANADOS

*Crollopposto*, 2013  
4 large framed prints  
36 x 84 inches each  
2 large objects  
84 x 42 (diam.) inches

SAMANTHA FIELDS

*11:10 pm*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
28 x 34 inches

*11:10 pm #2*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
52 x 80 inches

*Eugene 1*, 2013  
Acrylic on paper  
54 x 42 inches

*Eugene 2*, 2013  
Acrylic on paper  
54 x 42 inches

*Eugene 3*, 2013  
Acrylic on paper  
54 x 42 inches

*Everyone Loves This Place*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas,  
28 x 34 inches

*Madison*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
52 x 80 inches

*Passenger*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
50 x 60 inches

*Route 2*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
48 x 48 inches

*Stop*, 2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
28 x 34 inches

JUDITHE HERNÁNDEZ

*The Ascension*, 2013  
Acrylic, paper, and pastel on archival panel  
30 x 40 inches

*Les Demoiselles d'Barrio*, 2013  
Acrylic, paper, and pastel on canvas  
60 x 80 inches (diptych)

*L'Épée de Sainte Jeanne*, 2013  
Acrylic, paper, and pastel on canvas  
40 x 60 inches

*Les Yeux du martyr*, 2013  
Acrylic, paper, and pastel on canvas  
40 x 60 inches

*The Purification*, 2013  
Acrylic, paper, and pastel on archival panel  
30 x 40 inches

CAROLE KIM

*VAULT #1: Understory*, 2013  
Video projection installation  
Sound by Toshimaru Nakamura  
(Egrets/Samadhisound)  
144 x 96 x 174 inches

*VAULT #2: Rings*, 2013  
Video projection installation  
Sound by Toshimaru Nakamura  
(Egrets/Samadhisound)  
144 x 96 x 174 inches

NERY GABRIEL LEMUS

*De Guatemala a Guatepeor*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 24 x 22 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and Charlie James  
Gallery

*I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me*, 2013,  
HD video, color, sound  
Approx. 15 minutes  
Courtesy of the artist and Charlie James  
Gallery

*My Mother Did Not Come from Outer  
Space*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 41 x 72 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and Charlie James  
Gallery

*She's Always Known That She's Not  
a Wetback*, 2013  
Oil on canvas, 41 x 72 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and Charlie James  
Gallery

REBECA MÉNDEZ

*Never Happened Again, Glaciers 2*, 2012  
Single-channel video projected at  
architectural scale, color, silent  
8:48 minutes

*Arctic Sea 1*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
36 x 44 inches

*Circum/bi/polar 1 (Arctic Tern)*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
79 x 56 inches

*80° 01' 00" N*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
36 x 44 inches

*Glacier Ice 1 (Monacobreen)*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
36 x 44 inches

*Ice Forms 1*, 2013  
Sound installation  
11:43 minutes (loop)

*El Norte 2*, 2013  
Single-channel video projected at  
architectural scale, color, silent  
4:26 minutes

*Ny Álesund Arctic Research Station 1*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
36 x 44 inches

*Ny Álesund Arctic Research Station 2*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
36 x 44 inches

*Virgoamna 1*, 2013  
Archival ink-jet print  
36 x 44 inches

REBECCA MORRIS

*Untitled (#06-13)*, 2013  
Oil on canvas  
87 x 80 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and Harris  
Lieberman Gallery, New York

## Performing Artists

MALATHI IYENGAR

Video of choreography and performance  
excerpts: *Shri Ganesha* (2009), *Bhavayami  
Gopalabalam* (2009), *Shivaya* (2010)  
28 minutes

MICHAEL WHITE

*Inspirations for "Orbit"*  
Video combining examples of past musical  
work with photographs by various artists that  
have inspired the new work *Orbit*.  
32 minutes

*All works are courtesy of the artist, unless  
otherwise noted.*