

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Jack Bankowsky "Best of 2016," *Artforum*, December, 2016

ARTFORUM

Best of 2016

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KAI ALTHOFF (MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; CURATED BY LAURA HOPTMAN AND MARGARET EWING) Consult the deliberately tattered (and conspicuously incomplete) checklists at the gallery's entrance; savor the catalogue's contentious curator interview ("KA: I think you are blind. . . . LH: I am most certainly not blind"); and lose yourself in the vertiginous, granny's-attic mise-en-scène that threatens to gobble up the jewel-like easel paintings which stud the chaos. If Althoff bites the hand that feeds as hard as he does—and, what's more, performs his ingratitude for all to see—this has everything to do with an artful ecology that depends as much on what transpires beyond the edges of the canvas as within the frame, and yet to say as much fails to capture the work's singular poetry. If I had to pick one flourish among a hundred to betoken Althoff's oblique genius, it might as well be the jeweled brooch (paste, of course!) that threatens to slip between the cracks of the tatty Deco settee on which it casually alights. MOMA risked a finger in reaching out to this *monstre sacré* in the making, but bravery has been repaid with the show of the year.

On view through January 22, 2017.

