Sculpture 2), 2006, a surrealist composition of a disembodied black ceramic leg lying next to a tumbler of whiskey on a tabletop. The idea of a fetch as surrogate and instrument of sexual pleasure suggested here is further complicated by the proximity of Trockel's Mosquito Fighter, 2004, a pretied arabesque form made of silicone that evokes a woven basket, a hand fan, and a bulbous in equal measure. Lastly, two copies of Fradenk's 1971 catalogue Sculpture-objets-tableaux refract the whole ensemble through ideas of reproduction and doubling, while simultaneously drawing the viewer's attention back to that artist's other objects displayed across the room. The sheer range of associations evoked by this combination creates an affecting intellectual and emotional maze, and the meanings of the individual objects are multiplied by their mutual influence. Rather than conform to the parameters of the already known, the emotive logic of these connections demands that new lines be drawn to accommodate it. If such collisions leave their viewers with more questions than answers, they nevertheless embody the razor-sharp conviction behind Trockel's approach, which transcends mere selection and arrangement to create a new aesthetic.

The sense of probing—and of being propelled by the promise of open meanings rather than satisfied by the resolution of closed propositions—also pervades the large collection of Trockel's "book drafts" displayed on the fourth floor. This installation of 136 individual works on paper, dating between 1971 and 2005, provides a kind of vertical core sample of the artist's career, read through one of her lesser-known activities. Maquettes for books, most of which were not realized, these works on paper exemplify (among many other things) Trockel's interest in appropriation, collage, and the frisson of composed words and images. The physical modesty of each individual example is inversely proportional to the diverse interests revealed by the group as a whole. The collection is almost like an exhibition within an exhibition, and it is truly inspiring to think that this entire, far-reaching work of curiosities and competences emerged from the desk of a single artist. A select group of Trockel's ceramics rounded out the fourth floor—the only section of the exhibition not shared with other artists. Picking up chronologically where the book drafts left off, these nineteen works, made between 2006 and 2012, range from small material investigations to larger-than-life-size architectural interventions. A selection of some of the best of her recent work, they reveal Trockel's interest in the play between form and formlessness, as well as the vagaries of surface and finish inherent in this medium. Much of the visual pleasure here comes from experiencing the formal subtleties of Trockel's particular use of ceramic at vastly different scales: enjoying the contrast, for example, between the immersive, platinum-glazed surface of Grater 2, 2006, and the intimate yet no less captivating nooks and crannies of General 7, 2008, a small, biomorphic shape, featuring an evocative purple void ringed with a silver necklace.

The exhibition's last remaining section was filled with new wool paintings, redolent of the works undoubtedly most familiar to Trockel's viewers. These large-scale pieces, mostly from 2011 and 2012, continue the artist's ongoing use of various monochrome and striped pattern-
ing to explore process-based abstraction and the ontology of painting. Whereas many of her best-known paintings from the '80s and '90s engaged questions of the ready-made, mechanical reproduction, and labor in art through the use of machined woollens, these new works add nuance to this conversation by foregrounding their distinctive, handmade qualities and introducing a new, explosive palette. However, the delicate and repetitive process of wrapping the colored spun wool in clean, straight lines around shallow Perseus supports is complicated by the paintings' juxtaposition with a selection of six works by the self-taught artist Judith Scott. Paired with Scott's evocative, tangled, irregularly bound objects, the Trockels seem archly ordered, disciplined, and surprisingly hard, further refracting discussions of process, craft, and artistic drive at the critical heart of Trockel's textile practices. Rather than seeming connected by the material category "wool," which gives the floor its theme, they offer contrasting models of order and gestalt. On another level, as with Trockel's ceramics, there is much to be said for appreciating all these wool works from a formal and material perspective: The sheer beauty of the hand-dyed fibers' absorption of light seems as vital a part of their artistic position as any ostensible critique of agency, facture, or modes of production. Indeed, reading Trockel's new works through Scott's made clear that the elective affinities running throughout the show may, in the end, have more to do with a sense of obsessive intensity, material meticulousness, and individual points of view than with particular narrative themes.

As much as "A Cosmos" is held together by Trockel's unmistakable and compelling artistic sensibility, it foregrounds and celebrates diversity in all forms as well. By privileging the polyvocal as opposed to the monologic, the collaborative as opposed to the authored, questions as opposed to answers, the show not only offers a much-needed antidote to the worst tendencies of our current and still hyperbolically individualistic art world but also provides an important precedent for a different, more appealing type of artistic production. Trockel's work has always embodied such qualities. Almost twenty years ago, the artist Jutta Koether wrote an essay detailing how Trockel characterized a vital model of artmaking and artistic identity as an alternative to the dominant modes of the go-'80s. And although Koether's analysis was specifically framed in terms of attitudes and identities offered to women artists in Germany at the time, that swaggering, immodest context seems only to have globalized in the intervening years. Indeed, the quiet resistance and modeled differences already present in Trockel's early work, which have always made her an artist's artist, have renewed urgency and relevance for all makers everywhere today. In this sense, this exhibition's strength may not lie in fully embodying Trockel's singular artistic vision—though we can be thankful that it does—but in the crucial ways in which it demonstrates an attitude and a methodology for attending to the world's diversity, in art and beyond.