
On *THE* Radar

Seventeen Artists You Should Know About

It's *THE magazine Los Angeles's* first annual summer issue, and to make you care, we're devoting it to emerging artists.

The thinking was, school's back in session, who are the hottest players on the courts? Simple as that. But why do this at all? What's the big deal about emerging artists, as opposed to established artists, or obscure artists, or for that matter over-recognized or over-the-hill or not-yet-ready-for-prime-time artists? The fact is that Los Angeles's art scene — driven as it is by the impressive network of art schools and departments in the region — is, and has long been, defined by the artists who emerge into it. This is not (at least any longer) true of New York, for instance, which is driven by the art market far more than by its artists. And those other American cities for which it is also true — Philadelphia, for example — boast art scenes not large enough to present their artists effectively beyond their borders. This makes Los Angeles de facto the nation's largest cauldron of "new talent" (which is what "emerging artists" were called back in the day . . .).

Wouldn't it be more useful to examine the mechanisms by which an artist emerges? Well, sure, but who has the time or space? Rather, you can consider our declarations here implicit critiques of the whole "emerging artist" racket. This is not necessarily to bemoan the tendency to look for new faces — contemporary artistic discourse evolves thanks, among other things, to a constant infusion of new ideas and practices and skill sets — but to loosen the grip, however slightly, that conventional thinking and mainstream marketing have on the whole process of emergence. For better or worse, all of us at *THE magazine* are art-world monsters, hooked on the art world's cooking even as we might resist the soup of the day. What we're passing on to you here, once again to put it simply, is a few selections we've made from the menu — if not necessarily the stuff the maitre d' is flogging. — PETER FRANK

Renée Lotenero was one of the most startling finds in *Thing*, the Hammer Museum's 2005 survey of sculpture in Southern California. Here was someone who could conflate painting, photography, sculpture, and architecture into structures that seemed at once to be in a permanent state of entropy and a permanent state of construction, like parts of nearly demolished buildings that had become imbued in their fragile desuetude with animalistic drives — the drive to eat, the drive to reproduce, the drive to nurture. Lotenero continues to conjure her zombie building wings out of wildly diverse materials, almost anything that falls into her hands, but assembled with exquisite care — specifically, the care to capture the tendrulous, segmented way living things grow, and grow around, their armatures. Lotenero loves sprawl, and the funkier the better; her piles and trails of eccentric-

ally ordered segments are becoming more and more elaborate and baroque, and even her little one-off sculptures — two or three elements knocked together into toylike objects that seem to mock the extravagant pretensions of the large pieces with familial fondness — are gaining in intricacy. —PF



Mallorca, 2008, from *Shape and Shatter* at John Michael Kohler Arts Center, handmade tiles, steel, vintage Spanish roof tiles, photographs, dimensions variable. Courtesy John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI.