

Listening to Objects

Arnold J. Kemp, Betye Saar, Mira Schor, Nádia Taquary and Nicole Wermers

16 January–28 February 2026

Maximillian William is pleased to present *Listening to Objects*, a group exhibition featuring Arnold J. Kemp, Betye Saar, Mira Schor, Nádia Taquary and Nicole Wermers. In an age of constant distraction, sustained attention to the complex nature of any artwork is an act of radical resistance. The artists in *Listening to Objects* invite viewers to spend time navigating the tension between legibility and materiality, mystery and revelation.

Betye Saar's *Globe Trotter* (2007) addresses the history of migration, education and racial injustice. A small cage holds a vintage toy soldier, its features worn and rusted by time. The edge of the table is lined by a bamboo ruler, introducing notions of measurement and statistics, and the historical misuse of these ideas. The ruler also serves to remind the viewer of the tininess of the cage compared to the implied enormity of the globe below. Illuminated from within, the globe hints at a planet that is bright and full of promise, yet unavailable to the caged soldier.

For her *Proposals*, Nicole Wermers also uses found objects, including everyday consumer items, to create pedestals upon which she places a ceramic sculpture of a female figure. Highlighting the role of women as the subject of both artworks and advertisements, Wermers brings a mischievous eye to the history of statuary, altering the voices of the objects she deploys. Presented as maquette-sized 'proposals', Wermers celebrates the female body at rest, placed in a position that both acknowledges and transcends our throwaway culture.

Created from shells, straw, beading, repurposed wood and other found materials, the works in Nádia Taquary's *Oriki* series are mask-like forms that confront the viewer like unplaceable artefacts. Embodying Afro-Brazilian traditions and practices, each of the works in her *Oriki* series has a ritualistic presence, at once an invitation to revel in beautiful surfaces and a challenge to how we might interpret complex artworks that emerge from hybrid cultures.

A fearless visionary for the past five decades, Mira Schor draws upon art history and feminist theory to address the role of art in an era of constant crisis. Schor's recent works on paper feature women in enclosed spaces, alone and in conversation with an orb or circle. In *Untitled* (2024), a winged figure looks at a book, the pages open to a spread of one dark and one light circle. The figure contemplates the shapes as if they are comprehensible sources of information, and yet their meaning remains obscure. In his varied oeuvre, Arnold J. Kemp often researches forgotten figures and histories, creating work that invites the viewer to engage imaginatively with voices from the past. An homage to the great jazz musician and poet, *Cecil Taylor / MOB* (2024) conjures, with a veil of elegant greys, an elegiac space of music and contemplation. Kemp's painting, and all the artworks in *Listening to Objects*, invite viewers to approach artworks with openness and curiosity, granting them the same level of attention that we offer a book, a piece of music, or a person.

Arnold J. Kemp (b. 1968, Boston, MA) works in painting, print, sculpture and poetry. Recent exhibitions include *Less Like an Object, More Like the Weather*, Neubauer Collegium, University of Chicago; *False Hydras*, JOAN, Los Angeles; and *When the Sick Rule The World*, Biquini Wax, EPS, Mexico City. Forthcoming in 2026, a mid-career survey, *Not One Thing*, Tufts University Art Galleries and the publication *Arnold J. Kemp: A Reader*, co-published by No Place Press and Tufts University Art Galleries. His works are in the collections of Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Studio Museum, Harlem; Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley; Portland Art Museum and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, among other public collections.

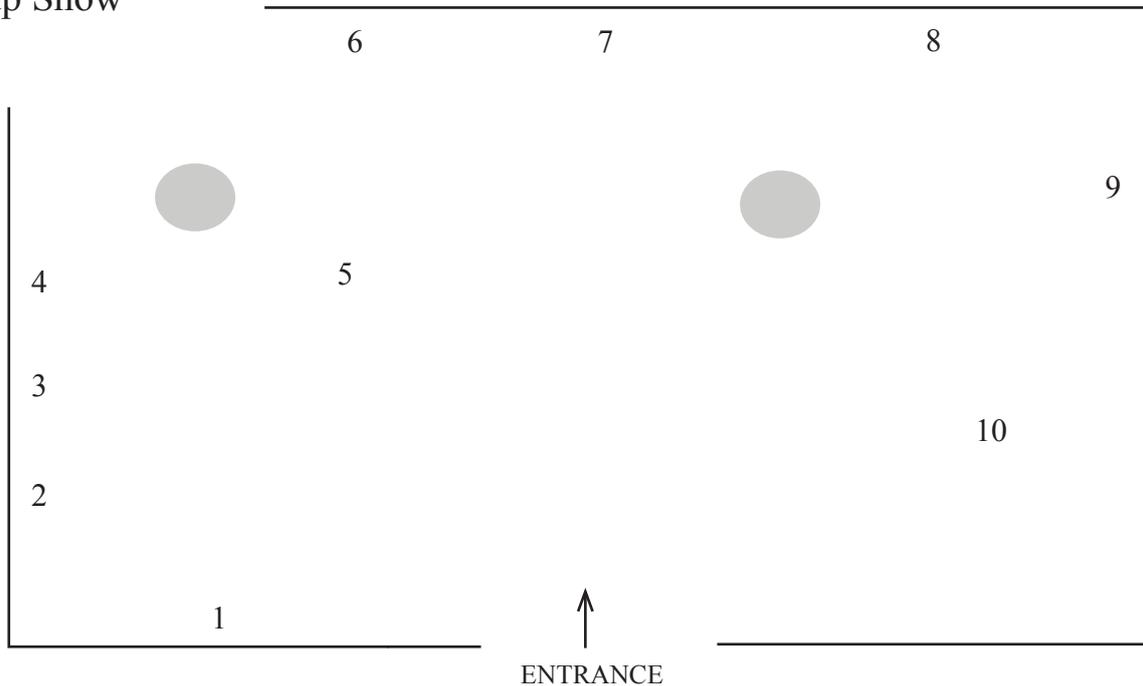
Betye Saar (b. 1926, Los Angeles, CA) is an American artist whose pioneering assemblage practice has played a formative role in contemporary art since the mid-twentieth century. Working with found objects and symbolically rich materials, Saar's work has been widely recognised for reflecting on African-American identity, spirituality and the interconnectedness between different cultures. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is held in major public collections.

Mira Schor (b. 1950, New York City, NY) is an American artist and writer, operating in the nexus of language, painting and feminist theory. She has exhibited at Bourse de Commerce – Pinault Collection, Paris; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne, Rochechouart; Jewish Museum, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; MoMA P.S.1, New York; Neuberger Museum, Purchase; Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield; Hauser & Wirth; Lyles & King; David Nolan; and P.P.O.W., all New York; and Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo and Brussels, and many other institutions and galleries.

Nádia Taquary (b. 1967, Salvador, Brazil) is a Brazilian artist whose work explores Afro-Brazilian sacred traditions and the presence of Black female protagonism through sculpture and installation. Her practice draws on materials such as beads, shells and wood to investigate identity, ancestry and cultural memory. Taquary's work has been exhibited internationally, including the 2025 International Biennial of Art of Antioquia and Medellín, the 36th São Paulo Biennial, the 24th Biennial of Sydney and the 15th Havana Biennial: Espirales Transatlánticas. Her works are in the collections of Pérez Art Museum, Miami, Museum of Arts and Design, New York; Institute for Studies on Latin American Art, New York; Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo; Museum of Art, Rio de Janeiro; Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador and Inhotim, Brumadinho.

Nicole Wermers (b. 1971, Emsdetten, Germany) lives and works in London. Working primarily in sculpture, her practice explores the physical and social hierarchies embedded within urban space as well as how the (female) body relates to the built environment, often drawing on references from art history and vernacular culture. Her work has been exhibited widely in international institutions including Tate Britain, London; Lenbachhaus, Munich; Kunsthaus Glarus; The Common Guild, Glasgow; Aspen Art Museum; Camden Arts Centre, London; and Secession, Vienna. Wermers was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2015 and has received numerous awards, including the Rome Prize and the Helmut-Kraft-Foundation Prize for Fine Arts.

Listening to Objects
 Group Show



1 Arnold J. Kemp
Cecil Taylor / MOB, 2025
 Ink and flashe on canvas
 106.7 x 121.9 cm
 42 x 48 in.

2 Nádia Taquary
Oriki 2403, 2024
 Reclaimed wood, lagdibás,
 cowrie shells, glass beads and copper
 36 x 20 x 15 cm
 14 1/8 x 7 7/8 x 5 7/8 in.

3 Nádia Taquary
Oriki Atotó, 2024
 Reclaimed wood, lagdibás, cowry shells,
 straw from the coast, glass beads and copper
 150 x 20 x 22 cm
 59 x 7 7/8 x 8 5/8 in.

4 Nádia Taquary
Oriki Oya, 2018
 Reclaimed wood, lagdibás, cowry shells,
 glass beads and copper
 40 x 18 x 13 cm
 15 3/4 x 7 1/8 x 5 1/8 in.

5 Betye Saar
Globe Trotter, 2007
 Mixed media assemblage
 82.5 x 46.4 x 35.9 cm
 32 1/2 x 18 1/4 x 14 1/8 in.

6 Mira Schor
Untitled, 2024
 Ink on paper
 24.8 x 19.1 cm
 9 3/4 x 7 1/2 in.

7 Mira Schor
Dress, 2025
 Ink and gesso on rice paper
 129.54 x 27.94 cm
 51 x 11 in.

8 Mira Schor
Dress, 2024
 Ink on paper
 10.8 x 15.2 cm
 4 1/4 x 6 in.

9 Mira Schor
Dress, 2024
 Ink on paper
 24.8 x 36.8 cm
 9 3/4 x 14 1/2 in.

10 Nicole Wermers
*Proposal for a Monument
 to a Reclining Female #23*, 2025
 Reinforced air dry clay,
 cardboard boxes, wood
 30 x 30 x 19 cm
 11 3/4 x 11 3/4 x 7 1/2 in.