

LÉVY GORVY WITH RUMBLER TO OPEN INAUGURAL EXHIBITION
DURING ZÜRICH ART WEEKEND

Experimenting with Materiality
Terry Adkins, Sonia Gomes, Senga Nengudi, Carol Rama

8 June—30 August 2019

Lévy Gorvy with Rumbler
Kirchgasse 50, 8001 Zürich

Opening Reception: Friday 7 June, 6-9PM



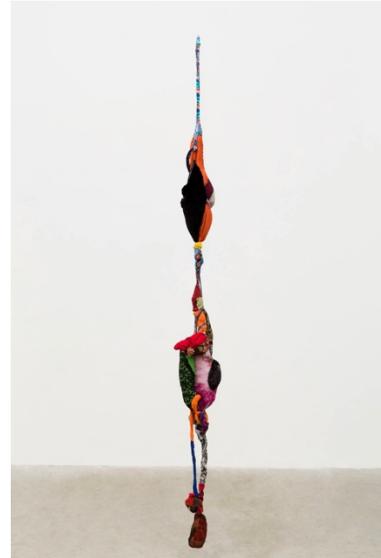
Terry Adkins. *Call*, 1987. Brass, iron, wood, and plaster, 7 x 47 1/2 x 7 inches (18 x 121 x 18 cm). © Terry Adkins. Courtesy of the Estate of Terry Adkins. Photo: Tom Powel Imaging.

Zürich—Terry Adkins once described his method of repurposing found materials as “potential disclosure,” a process in which the strategic arrangement of objects revealed latent historical or metaphorical associations. *Experimenting with Materiality*, opening 8 June during Zürich Art Weekend, considers the ways that such gestures of recontextualization manifest in the multimedia work of Adkins, Sonia Gomes, Senga Nengudi, and Carol Rama—artists who, despite working in disparate contexts, found resonant approaches to materiality. Using quotidian objects as their primary media, each artist cultivated a historically-charged practice examining ongoing dialogues pertaining to race, gender, and industry. Engaging parallel assemblage techniques, each artist’s work is rooted in deep spiritualism that allowed them to pursue an art that elevates the base substance of their media through its incorporation into a transcendent whole. Brought

together for the first time at Lévy Gorvy with Rumbler in Zürich, *Experimenting with Materiality* will present seminal works by these artists in celebration of the innovation and complexity of their practices.

While a majority of the works in *Experimenting with Materiality* are ineluctably abstract, a clear biomorphism defines many of these artists’ compositions, and numerous works incorporate performative themes. Terry Adkins’s brass, iron, and plaster *Call* (1987) resembles a kora—a long-necked harp lute of the West African musical tradition. An acclaimed multi-instrumentalist jazz musician, Adkins created this vital work during a particularly generative residency in Zürich, which also brought about the formation of Lone Wolf Recital Corps, a sound-based performance collective that is still active today. Senga Nengudi came to performance through her study of dance in Los Angeles in the late 1960s, soon becoming an active member of an emerging community of politically-engaged African American artists. Developing a practice that tended toward abstract, dematerialized, and conceptual artistic modes, Nengudi staged *Ceremony for Freeway Fets* in 1978. The photographs on view in the exhibition document that performance, which Nengudi conceptualized as a christening for her first public installation—an assemblage of variously bound, distended, and knotted nylon mesh pantyhose wrapped around the supporting columns of a freeway overpass.

The act of binding is likewise a central aspect of the practice of Sonia Gomes, whose sculpture repurposes the clothing, patchwork, and textile designs of her native Brazil. Various twisting, stitching, and draping these materials over a variety of found objects, Gomes invokes the entwined histories of gender, class, and colonial struggle in such works as *Untitled* (2018), an example from the artist's ongoing *Pendientes* series. Simultaneously referencing the traditions of Afro-Brazilian folk ritual, the economic legacy of the region's textile industry, and the artist's own underprivileged childhood, the *Pendientes* converge the struggle of marginalized peoples into a materially diverse, precariously suspended form. Similarly concerned with the strictures of dominant ideologies, Carol Rama's highly variegated oeuvre is known for its defiance of social convention. *Presagi di Birnam* (1994), a post-minimalist assemblage of vinyl, metal, and rubber, is named for the premonition of the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. By referencing feminine characters whose unusual powers have rendered them social outcasts, the work asserts the resilience of such figures through a deceptively simple arrangement of weathered steel and deflated, phallic inner tubes and bicycle tires.



Sonia Gomes. *Untitled*, from *Pendientes* series, 2018. Stitching, bindings, different fabrics and laces, 107 7/8 x 11 13/16 x 11 13/16 (274 x 30 x 30 cm). © Sonia Gomes. Courtesy of Mendes Wood DM São Paulo, Brussels, New York.

Culling the detritus of their distinct cultures, Adkins, Gomes, Nengudi, and Rama each engage assemblage as a means of developing nuanced bodies of work centered on the transfiguration of found materials. A subtle transgression lies at the crux of each work on view in *Experimenting with Materiality*, as each artist seeks to address the abiding forces of personal and sociopolitical upheaval. While each artist investigates the liminal space between abstraction and figuration, the formal innovations of their work are dependent upon the reconstitution of personal and collective memory. By turns violent and consonant, the works presented here reconcile the material with the spiritual by engaging the fraught debris of multivalent and open-ended narratives.

About Lévy Gorvy

Lévy Gorvy cultivates a program devoted to innovation and connoisseurship in the fields of modern, postwar, and contemporary art. Founded by Dominique Lévy and Brett Gorvy, Lévy Gorvy maintains gallery spaces at 909 Madison Avenue in New York, in Mayfair, London, and in Central, Hong Kong. The gallery fosters continued dedication to the living artists and artists' estates that it represents and offers a robust program of exhibitions and multidisciplinary events. The gallery also produces ongoing art historical research and original scholarship, publishing exhibition catalogues, monographs, and other key publications. In Zürich, Lévy Gorvy with Rumbler offers bespoke private advisory services to collectors and institutions around the globe.

909 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10021, +1 212 772 2004
22 Old Bond Street, London W1S 4PY, +44 203 696 5910
Ground Floor, 2 Ice House Street, Central, Hong Kong, +852 2613 9568
Kirchgasse 50, 8001 Zürich, +41 44 260 44 00
www.levygorvy.com | [@levygorvy](https://twitter.com/levygorvy)

Press Contacts

Marta de Movellan, Lévy Gorvy, marta@levygorvy.com
Sam Talbot, sam@sam-talbot.com