



Left: Giorgio Andreotta Calò, *Clessidra (Hourglass)*, 2007–15. Wood and caranto clay, 146.5 x 32 cm. diameter. Right: Giorgio Andreotta Calò, *Medusa*, 2015. Bronze, 86 x 38 cm. diameter. Below: Antoni Tàpies, installation view of “Tàpies: From Within,” 2015.

albeit recorded or frustrated. Trees show (through dendrochronology) their life, now frozen in their trunks, but another distancing process is at work here—the casting of that formerly living material in bronze. *Untitled* (2012), which fittingly bears the shadow of a neighboring tree, was created by exposing photographic paper to its surroundings, which recalls the daguerreotypes that Ruskin made to accompany *The Stones of Venice*. Here, too, we find suggestions of temporality, the elapsing of time, erosion, entropy, decay, and ultimately death—which are such powerful and poignant themes elsewhere in the work. Like an affectionate, if somewhat ghoulish memento of a lost friend, Calò’s work acts like a death mask of Venice.

—Jonathan R. Jones

MIAMI

Antoni Tàpies

Perez Art Museum Miami

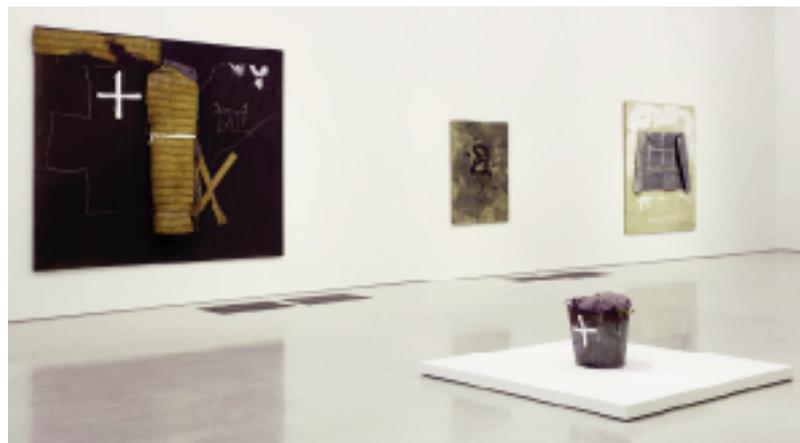
“Tàpies: From Within,” the first major survey of Antoni Tàpies’s work since his death in 2012, featured 50 paintings, drawings, and three-dimensional pieces chosen from the artist’s own collection and from the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona. The exhibition began with oil paintings from 1945, from the start of Tàpies’s career. Collage elements in *Fils sobre cartó* (*Threads on Cardboard*) and *Collage del papel de plata* (*Collage of Silver Paper*), both from 1946, demonstrate his interest in building out or on flat canvas—a technique that would develop over time into a hallmark, particularly with the addition of dirt and stones. At times, the moody, dramatic canvases lining the walls had the

effect of focusing attention on the select pieces of sculpture. *Nus marró* (1964), a brown knot, resembled a knotted, greasy rag that one might find discarded on the floor of an auto shop. Suspended in the air from a transparent line, it cast a mesmerizing shadow and felt quite

austere among the richly colored paintings.

The exhibition underlined an intriguing dichotomy between the lushness of certain canvases and the relative sobriety, even asceticism, of the sculptures and assemblages. For example, *Verd-blau palla* (*Green-Blue Straw*, 1968), which combines paint on wood and straw, was quite striking with its blue and green strokes and exuberant scattering of gold-colored straw. By contrast, one couldn’t help but notice how *Cadira i roba* (*Chair and Clothes*), a battered wooden chair draped with worn blankets, towels, and other fabric items, appeared as though someone had thoughtlessly abandoned a pile of soiled laundry.

Tàpies’s fascination with Asian art, Buddhism, Hinduism, and the icon of the cross became evident as the show proceeded. The assemblage *Embolcall* (*Wrapping*, 1994) featured a prominent reed mat that had been wrapped and tied, as though, in the words of one viewer, “there was a body inside.” Two crosses and two closed eyelids further hinted at the mystical. *Atman* was constructed from what appeared to be a section of a wooden shipping crate, onto which a dramatic black altar-like form had been painted; above were the words “Atman,” “Brahman,” and “Purusha” painted in white. In the Upanishads, Atman represents the soul as distinct from the body, mind,





or ego, a soul that is at one with Brahman, or the universal absolute. In these pieces, Tàpies uses the mysteriousness of abstraction to contemplate the mystery of religion. The correspondence was magnified in the quiet hush of the museum, a secular version of a temple or meditation room. The boldness of works such as *Atman* and *Embolcall* starkly contrasted with *Pila de mantes* (*Pile of Blankets*), a sober stack of institutional-style gray blankets, and *Cubell*, a metal bucket painted with a white cross and filled with somber-looking fabric.

Not only has Tàpies's work served as an important inspiration for other modern and contemporary artists, his resistance to categorization (painter or sculptor, two or three dimensions) represents a hybridization that still feels fresh. Interestingly, PAMM concurrently exhibited *WasteAfterWaste*, an explosive, playful installation of garbage and used objects created by Argentine-born Diego Bianchi. This new work demonstrated Tàpies's far-ranging influence and how the Dada movement continues to inspire artists who choose to work with discarded objects and readymades.

—Laura Albritton

CHICAGO

Barbara Cooper Perimeter Gallery

In an age when creating the next new thing is pervasive, Barbara Cooper, a Chicago-based sculptor, offers a refreshing take on art, with nature as her starting point. Rather than compete with nature, she evoked its depths by using repurposed materials in her recent exhibition, "Repur-

posing: Small Sculpture." The results were striking. Cooper, who has worked with wood veneer since the late 1980s, "finds the world of nature to be one that creates a sense of awe...it provides a model of how to be in the world." Her sculptures, with their repurposed materials, not only incorporate themes of growth and decay, development and transformation, they also echo those themes back to the viewer, underscoring how natural processes underpin human life.

Descending the staircase, viewers entered a small, dimly lit room filled with eight of Cooper's wood sculptures, made between 2011 and 2015. Intimate, contemplative, and devoid of distractions, this lower-level gallery was a key feature of the exhibition, and it worked to Cooper's benefit. Its welcoming environment created an ideal place to visually explore and intellectually engage with the work—an array of sculptures, some on plinths, others on walls, all of them maintaining Cooper's laudable commitment to handcraft. Tactile qualities added to the aesthetic aspect: many pieces included a juxtaposition of smooth and coarse. In *Channel*, for example, wavy, rugged layers of wood emerge from a refined exterior. Cooper's works not only delight the eye with their undoubted beauty, but also intrigue the mind by tacitly encouraging thinking and discovery.

One joy of the show was how the work changed in response to differ-

Above: Barbara Cooper, *Twine*, 2014. Wood and burl, 15 x 38 x 9 in. **Right:** Nicola L., *Atmosphere*, 2005. Transparent cotton, 120 x 90 in.

ent viewing angles. According to Cooper, "sculpture should entice you to move around it by revealing something different on all sides." *Mantel*, placed on a plinth, validates this principle. From one view, it appears to contain three circular shapes melded together; another angle reveals a burgeoning interior tightly filled with thin layers of wood surrounding a burl. Or take *Volute*, a wall-hung piece that emanates expansive shadows when seen head-on. A step to either side reveals the irregularities of its wound form—one side more bulbous than the other.

It was helpful to recall the show's title when exploring the work. The act of repurposing is at the heart of Cooper's practice. Although she has

long used veneer scraps from the wood industry, this body of work also includes parts from previous sculptures and burls found around Chicago. As Cooper puts it, "[Th]ese pieces were responses to found form...I was responding to and improvising on these parts and trying to find a way to make a new 'whole' from them." That "whole" begins with nature. This meditative show propelled viewers on a journey of life, growth, death, destruction, and transformation, one that continued outside the gallery and made the world look just a bit different.

—Amy Haddad

NEW YORK

Nicola L.

Elga Wimmer Gallery

Nicola L., a French-born, New York-based sculptor of considerable talent, who has won recognition over a period of decades, recently restaged "Atmosphere in White," a comprehensive show of her work originally presented at the Liverpool Biennial



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