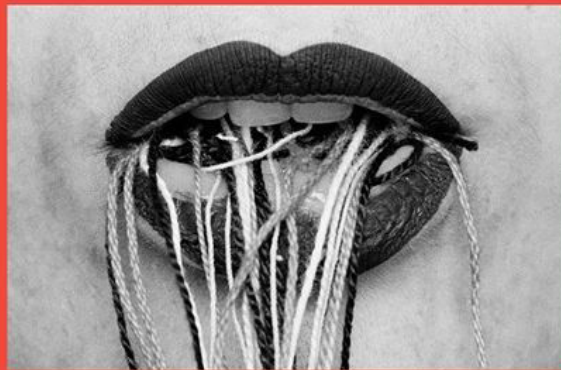




LOCKS GALLERY

DELIRIOUS

ART AT THE
LIMITS
OF REASON 1950-1980



Delirious: Art at the Limits of Reason, 1950-1980

Curated by Kelly Baum at the Met Breuer

September 13, 2017 - January 14, 2018.

"Delirious times demand delirious art, or so this exhibition will propose. The years between 1950 and 1980 were beset by upheaval. Around the globe, military conflict proliferated and social and political unrest flared. Disenchantment with an oppressive rationalism mounted, as did a corollary interest in fantastic, hallucinatory experiences. Artists responded to these developments by incorporating absurdity, disorder, nonsense, disorientation, and repetition into their work. In the process, they destabilize space and perception, give form to extreme mental, emotional, and physical states, and derange otherwise logical structures and techniques. Delirious will explore the embrace of irrationality among American, Latin American, and European artists."

....

"Linked by a common distrust of reason, the featured works will alternately simulate and stimulate delirium, straining the limits of both legibility and intelligibility. Ultimately, the exhibition will ask if it is possible to understand a good deal of postwar art, even seemingly rational art, as an exercise in calculated lunacy."



Think Crazy: The Art and History of Delirium

By Kelly Baum, 2017

The Art of Delirium: Excess

p. 40-47

“ ‘For LeWitt’s generation,’ Krauss wrote in 1978, ‘a false and pious rationality was seem uniformly as he enemy of art.’ (117) Krauss has in mind a specific set of artistic practices: the ‘repetitious’ speech acts and reiterative objects that ‘proliferated [in the 1960s and 1970s] in seemingly endless and obsessional chain.’ (118) Her insight has bearing on a far wider range of artists than the Conceptualists and Minimalists, however. As will become evident, the complaint with ‘a false and pious rationality’ united a diverse range of painters, sculptors, performers, and videographers, many of whom otherwise worked at cross purposes with one another.

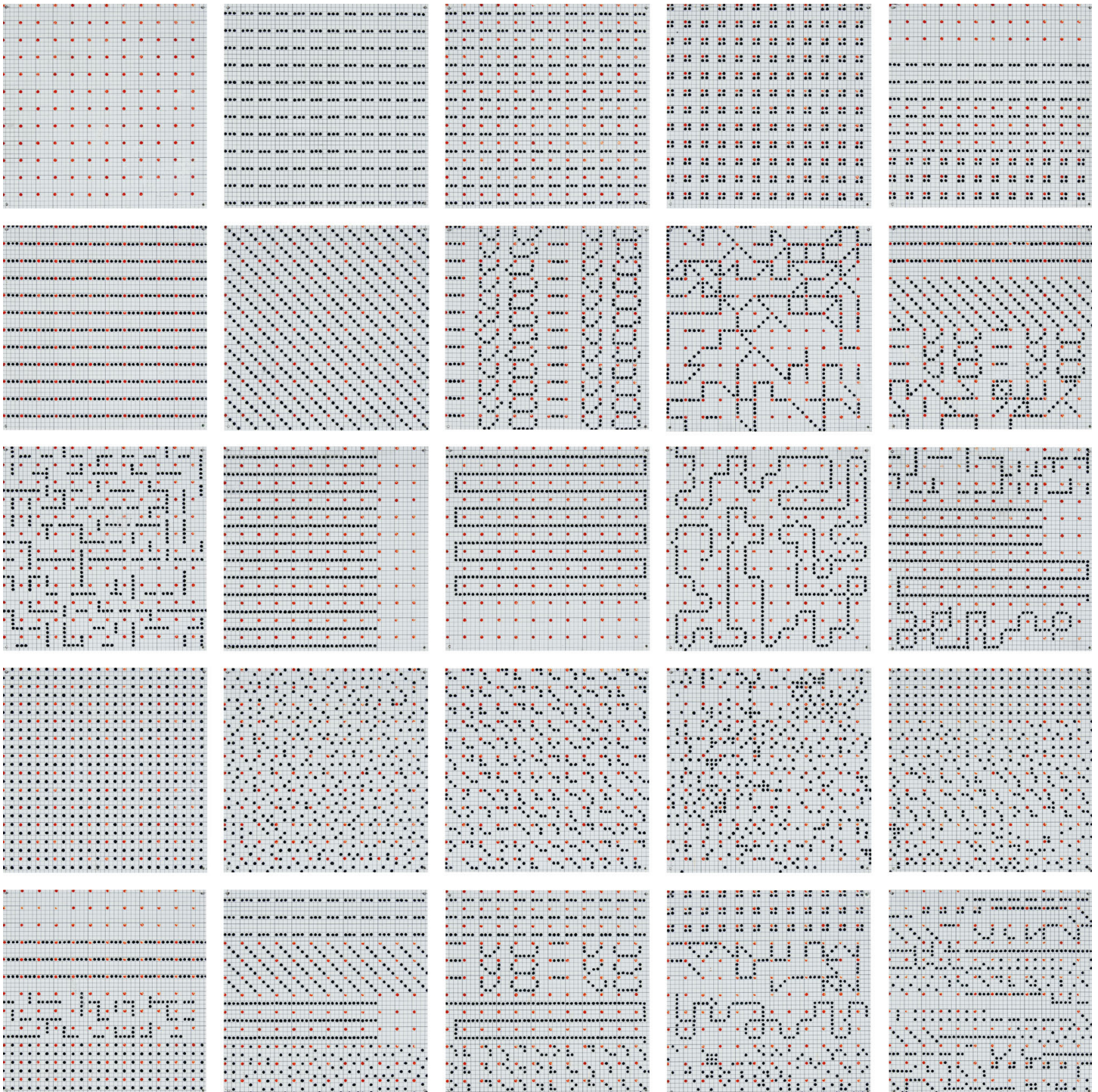
Repetition play a fundamental role in the paintings, drawings, and sculptures seen here. (119) The latter were not made by artists who create by reiterating, whether objects, quotients, quantities, intervals, or actions, but are also composed of recurring motifs. Such works thematize repetition in very direct ways, therefore. For its part, *Delirious* focuses on objects that repeat obsessively, that pursue reiteration to absurd, outrageous extremes. The compulsive aspects they display are simulated, however, distinguishing them from the products of the literally delirious...”

...

“Conceptual order and perceptual disorder also clash in Bartlett’s *Fixed / Variable* (1972) (pl.20) and Morellet’s *4 Grids 0 22.5 -45 -67.5* (1958) (pl.19), both of which stray from the rational, at least in the presence of viewers. (144) In each case, the systematic disposition of parts, whether dots or lines, generates hyperactive patterns that dazzle the eye. Much like LeWitt, Bartlett and Morellet exercise supreme control over their works’ execution, rationalizing production, only to relinquish that same control over their reception....”



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Jennifer Bartlett (American, born 1941)

Fixed /Variable, 1972
enamel over silkscreened grid on 25 baked enamel steel plates
64 x 64 inches
Locks Gallery



Vertigo

Page 47-48

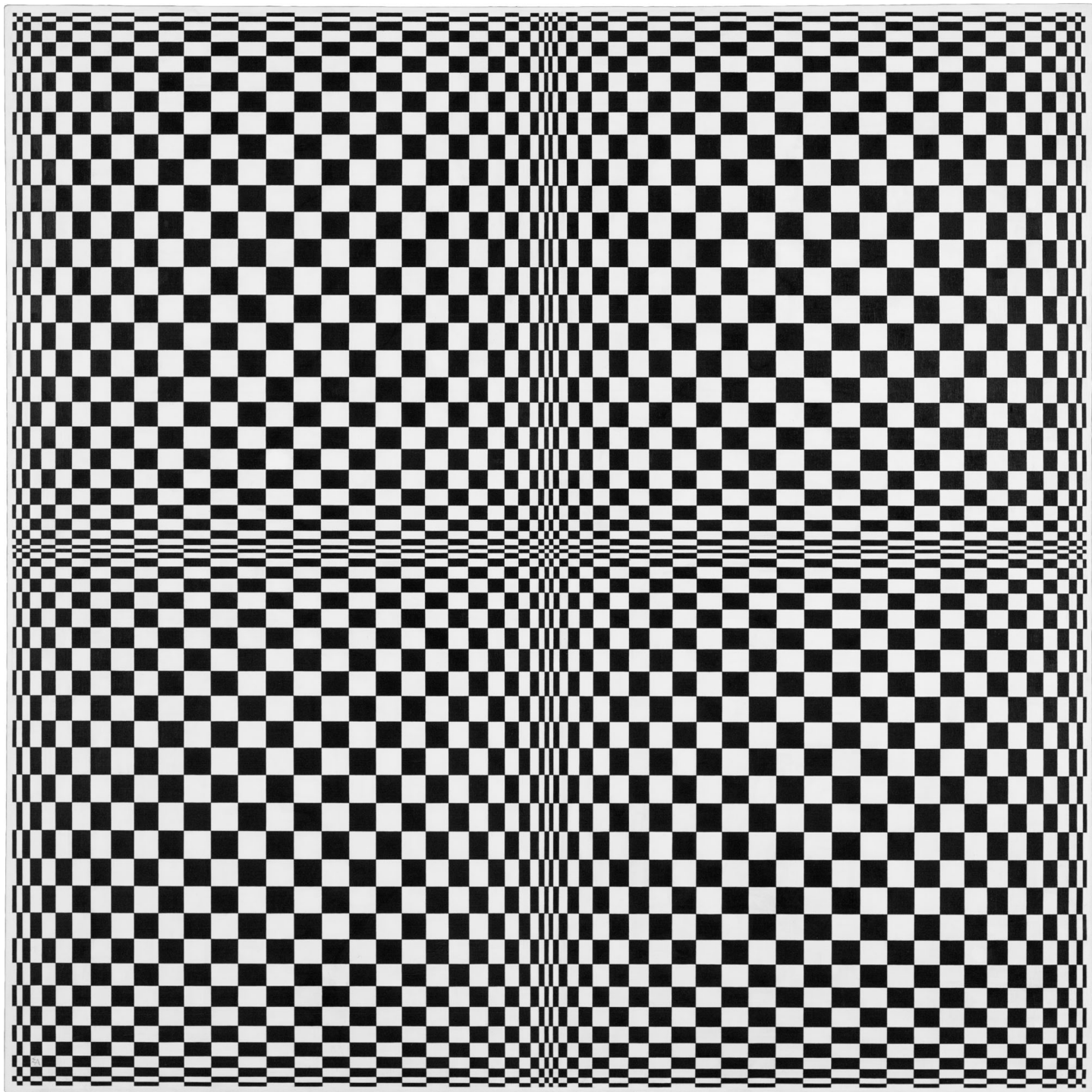
“Artists who experimented with abstract painting, sculpture, and photography also participated in the fray that was the 1960s and 1970s, producing works of art that allegorize through form, structure, and color the unstable times in which they were produced. This is especially true of the objects featured here, all of which throw viewers off balance, generating confusion and disequilibrium. In this section, readers will find illusionistic compositions that warp space and mirrored structures that debilitate vision. The effects of both are distinctly hallucinogenic. Many of these works derange the grid in the process, making something irrational or at least highly eccentric, out of something systematic. In doing so, they exploit the grid’s inherent flexibility, an attribute O’Doherty celebrated when he wrote: the grid is ‘supposed to be indexical of all that is rational, but I think it’s as mad as many logical things turn out to be – artificial, hysterical, subsuming its own version of chaos.’ (148)”

...

“Alongside Bochner’s warped grid stand three other such examples: Edna Andrade’s *Color Motion 4-64* (1964), Al Lovng’s *Untitled* (1971), and Dean Flemings’s *Snap Roll* (1965). Andrade’s subjects her checkboard pattern to systemic deformation, shrinking and expanding its individual modules by strict mathematical increments. The resulting grid seems to bulge and collapse, not unlike Lee Bontecou’s contemporaneous experiments with more organic, irregular compositions....”



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Edna Andrade (American, 1917-2008)

Color Motion 4-64, 1964

Oil on canvas

48 x 48 inches

Philadelphia Museum of Art



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Installation view: *Delirious: Art at the Limits of Reason, 1950-1980* at the Met Breuer.
September 12, 2017.