

SIGHTLINES



BRING TO LIGHT

David Gettsy is a key voice among a new generation of art historians—along with Darby English, Julia Bryan-Wilson and others—who are opening up art and its archives in critical interdisciplinary ways. The chapter on artist Nancy Grossman in Gettsy's new book, *Abstract Bodies*, is a revelation. It should be required reading for anyone looking at and thinking about contemporary sculpture.

Nancy Grossman: *Snarl*, 1988, patent leather, wood, paint, epoxy and zippers, 17½ by 9 by 10½ inches.



KITH AND KIN

As soon as I think I have the codes and references in Njideka Akunyili Crosby's arresting artwork figured out, a new layer of meaning emerges. She stitches together her Nigerian upbringing, fashion, music and domestic realities into a contemporary quilt of drawing, painting and printmaking. She has an enviable ability to turn family pictures and everyday scenes into expansive narratives about intimacy and love.



Njideka Akunyili Crosby: *Something Split and New*, 2013, acrylic, charcoal, pastel, colored pencil, collage and transfers on paper, 83¾ by 111¾ inches.

QUOTIDIAN RYTHYM

Far too many details in Rick Moody's new novel, *Hotels of North America*, hit close to home. It's a book—by my favorite writer—with an uncanny ability to disturb and expose. As always, Moody leaves the big questions on the table, and I appreciate the invitation to pick them up. I have a sweet tooth for the poetic power of lists; he is a king of the form. His list about "home," at the end of the book, is a killer. It will bring tears to your eyes.



Mark Bradford: *Deimos*, 2015, video, 1½ minutes.

NEVER FORGET

Mark Bradford's mesmerizing new video *Deimos*, which opened his recent show at Hauser & Wirth in New York, had me stuck like I was in a tractor beam. Monumental and fragile, universal and personal, his constellation of roller-skate wheels bouncing, spinning, falling and still was simple and gut-wrenching. For me, it joins works like Joe Brainard's *I Remember*, Felix Gonzalez-Torres's candy piles and Nan Goldin's *Ballad of Sexual Dependency* as a modern masterpiece of humanity and memory.

Ian Berry

The Tang Museum director shares five recent insights with Chris Chang.

Ian Berry, the director of the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, has organized over 90 exhibitions on subjects ranging from the artistic history of the Hudson River to Shaker furniture to paintings by Nicholas Krushenick. Berry sees his role at the Tang as involving civic responsibility as much as aesthetics: "In this season of political choice and debate, it is important to recognize the museum's growing role as a community town square." His upcoming exhibitions include a survey of Alma Thomas's work (organized with Lauren Haynes of the Studio Museum in Harlem) and "Borrowed Light," featuring photographs from the collection of artist Jack Shear.

SOUND ADVICE

The irrepressible joy of cellist Ashley Bathgate, guitarist Mark Stewart and the other astonishing players that make up the Bang on a Can All-Stars is continually inspirational. Over the years, the company has introduced me to many unknown worlds and artists that I now hold dear. On Feb. 18, the Tang will premiere a new composition by Brendon Randall-Myers, a musician they introduced me to. It's a perfect example of their commitment to mentoring and supporting the next generation of players and composers. As a teacher, I take their combination of curiosity, generosity and rigor to be an important model.