

Clockwise from top left:

JEAN FAUTRIER

Oradour-sur-Glane, 1945, oil and paper on canvas, 57 1/2 x 44 1/2". Menil Collection.

AGNES MARTIN

Milk River, 1963, oil on canvas, 72 x 72".
Whitney Museum of American Art.
Milk River (detail).

Cosmic Relief

Richard Tuttle

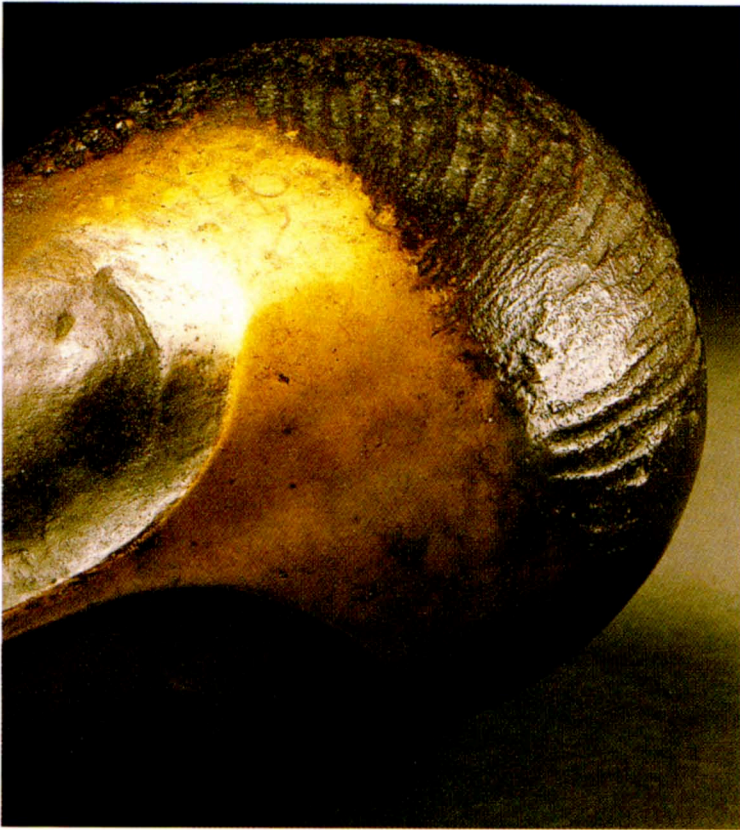
IT TAKES A SPECIAL TURN OF MIND to look at the sky and see goats, celestial twins, and bearskin-clad hunters—an elaborating mind, well upholstered with primary images. In short, that of a Greek shepherd whose ears ring with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. A somewhat plainer imagination—say that of a Shaker lying in the grass on a summer night—could come up with the Big Dipper and, should the fancy strike, populate the heavens with curved scythes, straight-backed chairs, and oval button boxes. Then, there are those paradigm-makers and -breakers who search the void for dwarf stars and black holes, of which the only evidence is the flecks of light that elegant calculations transform into mathematical wonders.

Such correlations depend on a highly developed knack for shape-making and a gift for patterning, allied to a blithe indifference to the obvious ways the same details might be mapped by more practical or prosaic sensibilities. Thus, at the origins of and in the indeterminate space between astrology (the truth of myth) and astronomy (the truth of science) lies whimsy, the great revealer of possibilities for which no higher necessity yet exists.

Generally speaking, professional curators are either astrologers

or astronomers. Their mission is to perfect the templates they have inherited. By contrast, Richard Tuttle belongs to the tribe of playful rearrangers whose skill is free association and whose only responsibility is to please themselves. Texture's infinitely variable relation to surface is the common denominator of the otherwise disparate paintings and objects that the artist has laid out here. Tuttle's special preoccupation is with those textures or analogous formal devices that suggest or actually introduce an element of relief into a work, rendering the dynamics of figure and ground ambiguous—or in some cases reversing them or making them explicitly contradictory. Thus Tuttle brings to art other than his own a keen appreciation of visual anomalies and improbable correspondences while sparing us the tedium of conclusive arguments as to why these eccentricities must be approached as revelation. Fautrier to Martin, Crivelli to Brancusi, Chryssa to Yuskavage—some new constellations. —ROBERT STORR

Each month in this series a different artist curates an "exhibition" for Artforum's pages.



Clockwise from top left:

CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI

Sleeping Muse (detail), 1910, bronze, ca. 6 7/8 x 10 1/4 x 7 3/4". Art Institute of Chicago.

CARLO CRIVELLI

Saints Peter and Paul (detail).
Saints Peter and Paul, ca. 1494, tempera on wood, 36 1/2 x 18 1/2". National Gallery, London.

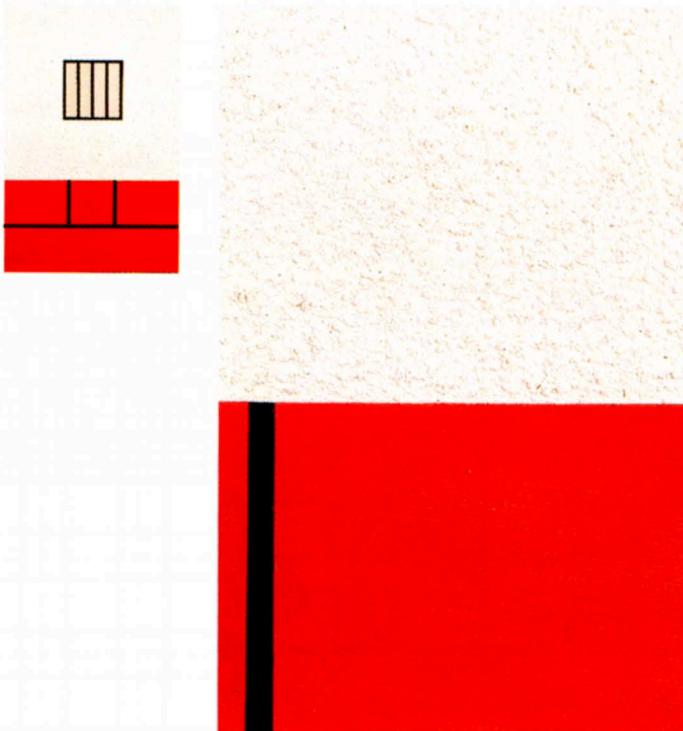
JOHN CONSTABLE

Hadleigh Castle, 1829, oil on canvas, 48 x 64 3/4". Yale Center for British Art.

PETER HALLEY

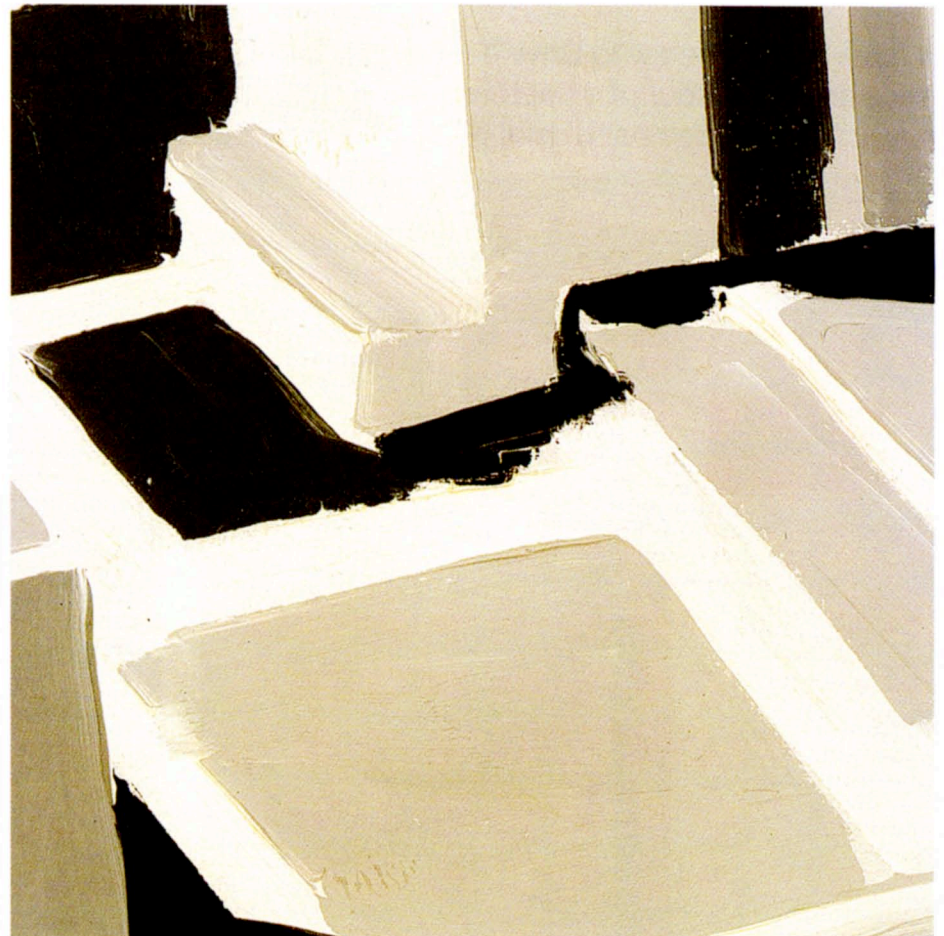
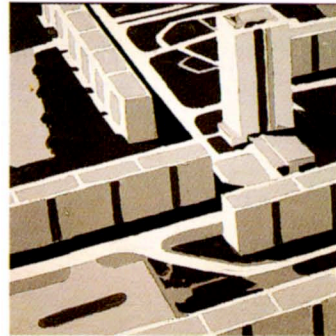
Prison with Conduit (detail).
Prison with Conduit, 1981, acrylic and Roll-a-Tex on canvas, 54 x 36".

"I have been taken with Crivelli for years. What's stunning is how he'd select a physical object—a key or the contour of a costume—and raise it off the surface. Gold, normally a sign of ambiguity, is suddenly the realest of real things." —Richard Tuttle





“The later his paintings, the more Constable dances white across the image. Some might call the flecks mere highlights, but they’re like physical embodiments of light—the place where texture, even relief, appears with tremendous emotional impact.” —RT



Clockwise from top left:

PABLO PICASSO

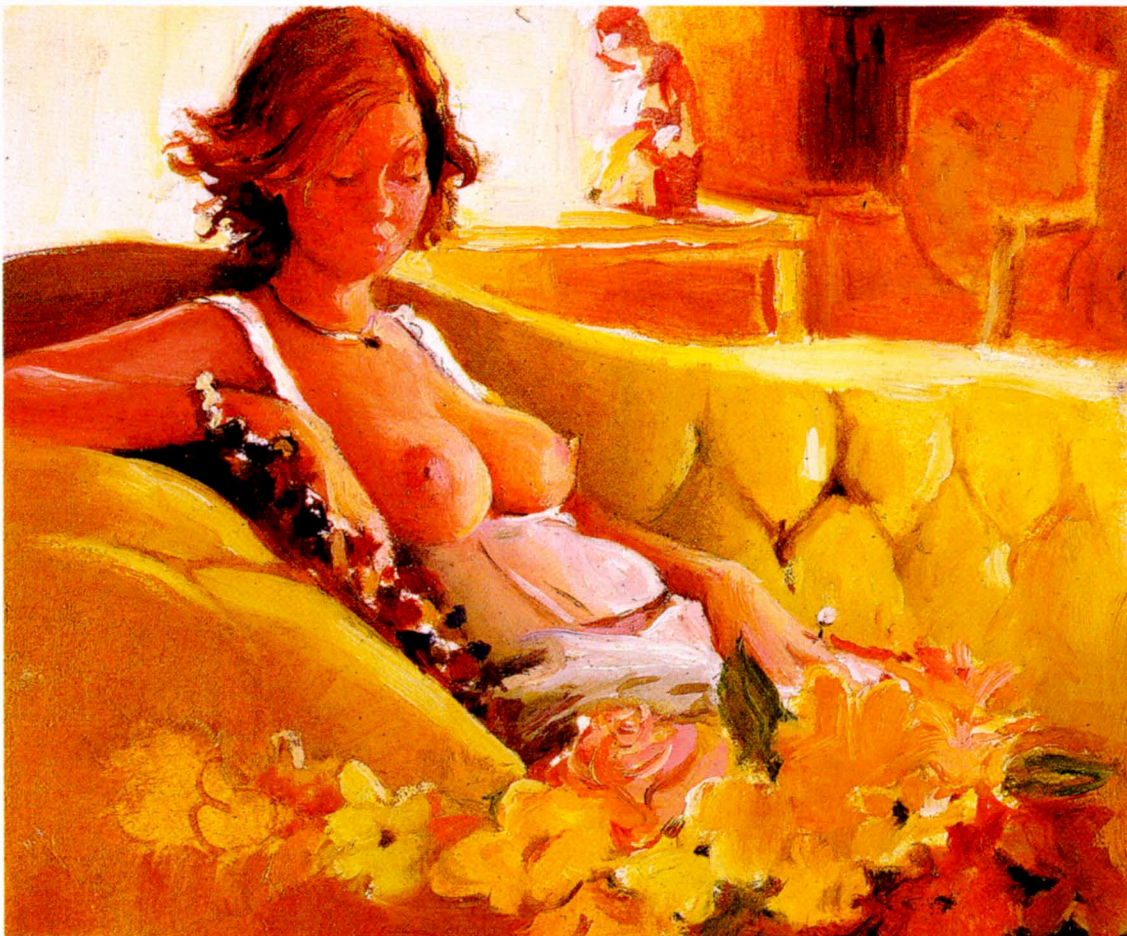
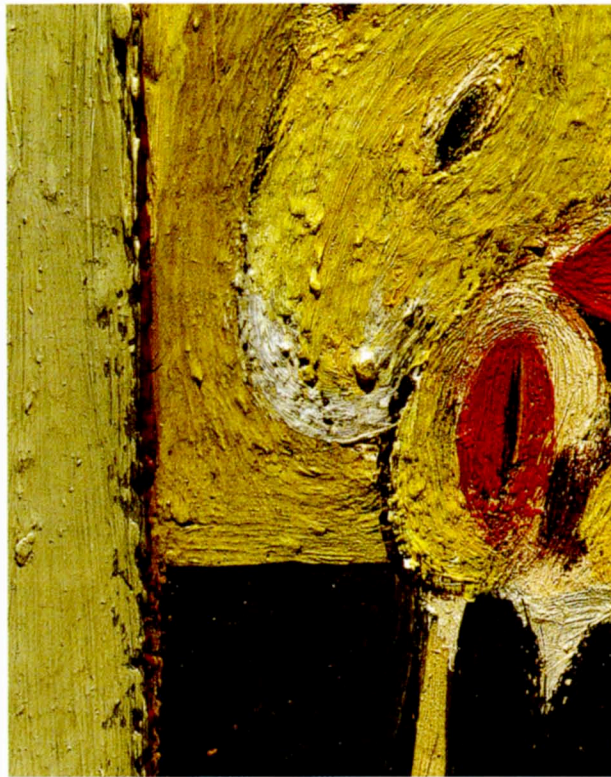
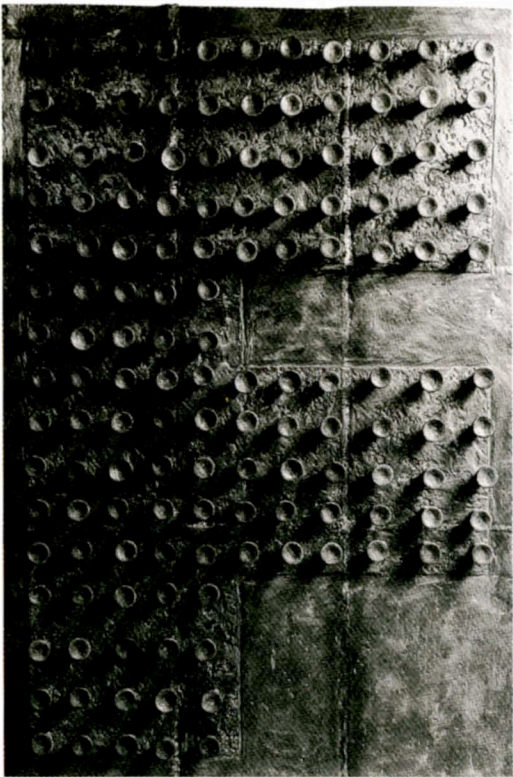
Still Life with Chair Caning, 1912, oil on canvas with rope and oilcloth, 11 1/2 x 14 3/4". Musée Picasso, Paris/Art Resource.

AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS

The Children of Jacob H. Schiff, 1884–1907, marble, 69 1/2 x 51". Metropolitan Museum of Art.
The Children of Jacob H. Schiff (detail).

GERHARD RICHTER

218-3, *Stadtbild SL* (detail).
218-3, *Stadtbild SL*, 1969, oil on canvas, 49 1/2 x 49 3/4".



Clockwise from top left:

CHRYSSA

Projection Letter F, 1958, aluminum, 68 3/4 x 46 3/4 x 2 1/2". Museum of Modern Art, New York.

ARSHILE GORKY

Personnage (detail).
Personnage, 1936, oil on cardboard, 10 3/4 x 8".
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

LISA YUSKAVAGE

Talia Reclining (detail).
Talia Reclining, 2000, oil on panel, 5 x 6".



Clockwise from top left:

**EUXITHEOS (POTTER) AND
EUPHRONIOS (PAINTER)**

*Calyx-krater (two details), Attic, 6th century BC,
terra-cotta, 18 x 21 1/2 x 21 1/2". Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

ARTIST UNKNOWN

Chavin pot, Peru, ca. 3000 BC, ceramic, 10 1/2 x 4 1/4 x 3 1/2".

HUBERT ROBERT AND THÉVENIN

*Basin of Apollo, 1774–79. Versailles, France.
Photo: Michel Saudan.*





“The words on the mosque lamp are raised, like the words applied in slip to the Greek vase; when it’s lit the characters seem to lift off. The text is from the Koran: ‘Allah is the light of heaven and earth.’ The connection between the two is one of the better definitions of God.” —RT



Clockwise from top left:

ARTIST UNKNOWN

Arita ware, Kakiemon type, Japan, late 1600s, porcelain with blue underglaze and enamel overglaze, 13 3/4 x 12 3/4 x 12 3/4". Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Arita ware (detail).

ARTIST UNKNOWN

Mamluk mosque lamp (twin views), late 13th century, freeblown, enameled, and gilded glass, 16 1/8 x 29 3/8 x 32 3/8". Metropolitan Museum of Art.

FELIPE BENITO ARCHULETA

Tiger (detail).

Tiger, ca. 1970, paint and gesso on cottonwood with straw, 32 1/2 x 71 x 17". American Folk Art Museum, New York.