

JANUARY 20 TO FEBRUARY 24, 2018

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Elana Herzog

NEW YORK

at LMAK

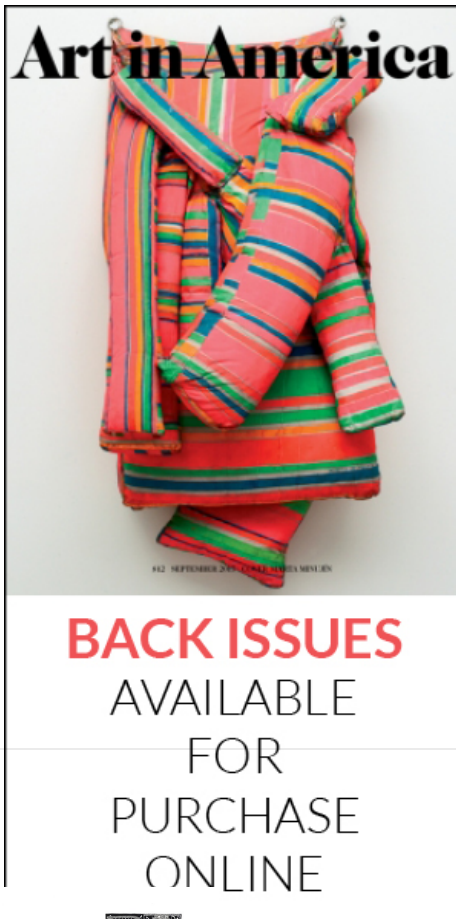
by [Sarah Schmerler](#)

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For the past 10 years, Elana Herzog has been creating impressive interventions out of ripped and otherwise deconstructed domestic fabrics that seem to grow seamlessly out of a room's corners, cling to a supporting column or hang (via thousands of industrial staples) from a wall. What most people don't know is that Herzog accomplishes the lion's share of her labor-intensive activity in the studio. There, equipped with Sheetrock panels, a pneumatic staple gun and a large supply of cotton tablecloths and chenille bedspreads, Herzog has time to work and plan for the installation. On-site, the Sheetrock is hung, and many more hours are spent augmenting and adjusting details. The final effect is almost magical, as though a vast, somewhat wild garden had grown in the gallery quite spontaneously.

This show marked a departure in process, though its end result was all the more impressive for it. Here Herzog opted to create all of her wall-based staplings in situ, paring her forms down only to their most linear essentials. She then added three-dimensional, freestanding sculptural forms in industrial materials that she hasn't embraced for 15 years. The result was an engagement of space so thorough that support and embellishment became indistinguishable.

LMAK's gallery (a narrow 83/4 feet wide by 40 feet deep) was put to use completel—up to the top quadrant of its 10-foot-tall walls and the bottoms of its 12-foot-high ceiling joists. Three long unbroken lines of torn fabric stapled to the walls ran all around the room, in places crisscrossing high above the viewer's head like telephone wires. Down the center of the space, panels of mediumdensity fiberboard (MDF) were attached to perforated L-shaped metal struts of the sort used to



create shelving units. Herzog exploited their modular capabilities, screwing the MDF into them at head height, where we might view a painting. Lines of fabric and staples traveled everywhere, not simply along the walls, but also across the metal-braced panels, as if in exuberant haste.

Herzog's use of color was at once pellmell and pleasing; fiddlehead curlicues of a feminine yellow chenille here, a fuzzy puff of red wool there. Best of all were the caution-orange chalk lines commonly used by workers at construction sites to mark a boundary. These were shamelessly visible beneath the fabric, as if the artist were thumbing her nose at the tradition of "underdrawing" while making the most of the eye-catching properties of this very bright color.

There was a palpable sense that the artist was having fun. But this much whimsy mixed with formal rigor would never be possible without a mastery gained from many years of practice. Born of hard work and canny formal strategies, Herzog's signature installations never feel anything but fresh.

Photo: View of Elana Herzog's installation Into the Fray, 2011; at LMAK.

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The Fine Print: Q+A With Martin Wilner

by Sarah Schmerler

I first saw Martin Wilner's work in 2005 at Pierogi Gallery in Brooklyn. I was particularly struck by a notebook-sized drawing in which Wilner documented his impressions of a trip he and his Holocaust-survivor parents made to Poland, trying to find the stuff that people who've lived to see the other side of something terrible can never find: reasons, the past, closure. The experience didn't [READ MORE](#)

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