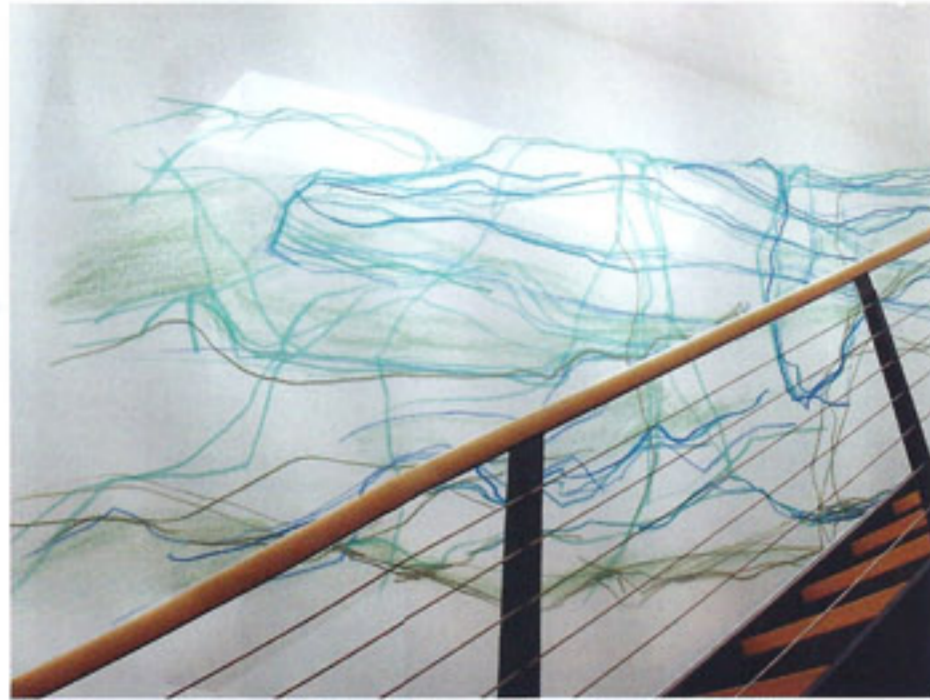


▼ **OONA STERN** GLACIER PLAID, 2010



◀ **NINA CHANEL ABNEY**
HOLEY GRAIL, 2010

▼ **OONA STERN**
MODEL FOR DREAMY, 2003



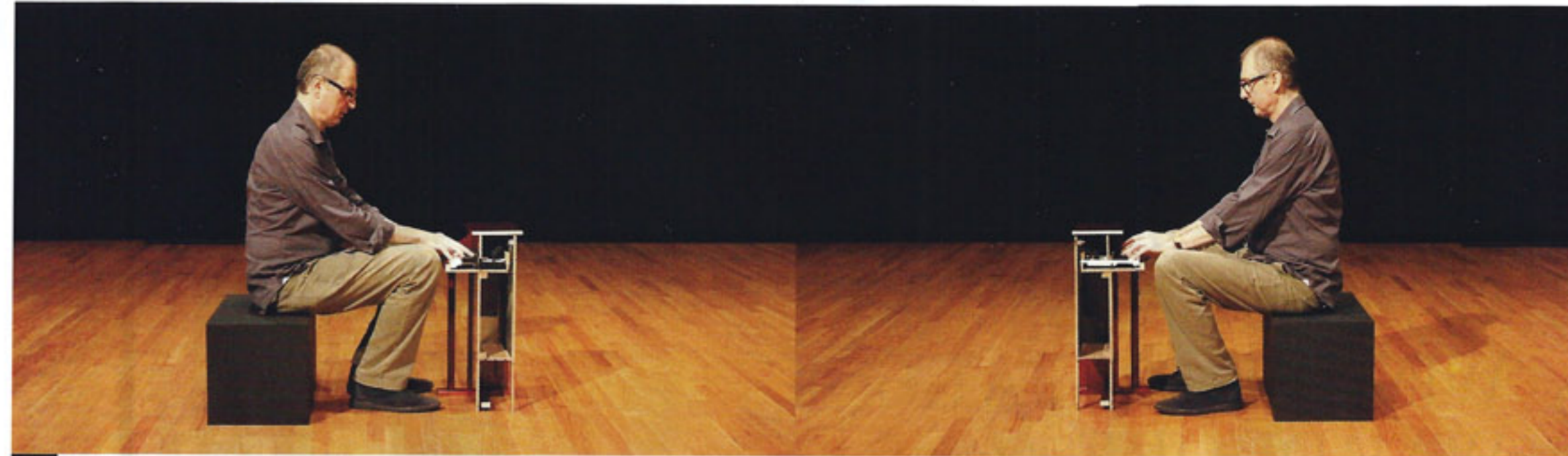
▲ **OONA STERN** PATIO, 2006



◀ **NINA CHANEL ABNEY**
UNTITLED (DISORDER), 2012



▼ **JANE BENSON** STILLS FROM DUAL-CHANNEL VIDEO: DUET FOR SPLIT TOY PIANO (PLAYING TO HIMSELF), 2011



NINA CHANEL ABNEY

The powerful narratives, color and form of Nina Chanel Abney's work hark back to the great American modernist painters of the mid 20th century with some mystic Outsider Art vision thrown in. Born of an urban tradition, her paintings address the cultural and sociopolitical associations of gender and race. However, to say only that implies that the work fits into a rather prosaic agenda. Abney's paintings are nothing of the kind. There is a sort of voodoo magic about them that draws us into the story we think is being told.

It is certainly her story, but it could also be ours.

JANE BENSON

Jane Benson's sculptural installations are often imbued with a dark, otherworldly aura, where materials mutate into something quite unexpected. While retaining this sense of transformation, *Duet for Split Toy Piano* is also something of a departure. In this two-channel video series, musicians perform original compositions

scored for the children's toy, but only half. The two halves are then synched to present the piece in its entirety.

The playfulness belies Benson's interest in materials and how the familiar and the everyday can be turned on their heads to make us look at things in ways we may not possibly have considered.

OONA STERN

Our world consists of elements we instantly recognize. We understand their purpose. Bricks and stones compose our quotidian environments, forcing nature to either give way completely, or play a subservient, decorative role.

Oona Stern changes the rules. Rather, she brings some of the old rules back into our lives. Soft things become hard and structural; hard things flow in unexpected ways. Nature enters the rigidity of our artificial spaces in a way that it hasn't for a very long time. A sod house was once a common site amid the prairies and plains of the Midwest. Today it is hard to conceive of such a dwelling, but Stern invites us to reconsider our relationships with nature and the past.



▲ **NINA CHANEL ABNEY** IVY AND THE JANITOR IN JANUARY, 2009



ART OF ANOTHER KIND

AQUA restaurant and its chef de cuisine, Sven Elverfeld, at The Ritz-Carlton in Wolfsburg, Germany, have been honored with three Michelin Stars. Chef Elverfeld continually deconstructs, reinvents and improves the artistry of his cuisine.

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Art is a language that transcends all others. Through it, cultural stories can be shared, experienced and explored by any and all. So too, travel is a form of cultural exploration. Art and travel complement each other as we seek to immerse ourselves in authentic cultural experiences.

This is a shared passion expressed in the pages of this magazine and one that The Ritz-Carlton seeks to bring to life via experiences around

the globe at their unique and special properties.

What better way to explore the world than by viewing it through the eyes of the next generation of visual artists—whose works are bringing our future into focus? The Art of Discovery series will give these emerging talents a platform—a voice—as they explore the world and master their craft. Indeed, the journey and the conversation will be worthy of us all.



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