

BROOKLYN

Andrea Loeffe
Smack Mellon

Confronting the prow of Andrea Loeffe's ark head-on made a powerful first impression. This foreshortened view indicated something vast

and ominous looming just inside the gallery but offered only the merest hint of what was actually there. *Homecoming* marked a significant departure from Loeffe's previous installations, which have filled spaces with all manner of objects, large and

small, through which viewer-participants were expected to walk, crawl, and even climb to become part of the visual experience. Here, however, in the middle of an otherwise empty space, was an object—a boat-like platform loaded with stuff—that

was more sculpture than installation, something to be experienced through circumnavigation, the more circuits made, the more to be discovered.

While Noah's ark served to rescue the essentials of creation, Loeffe's ark set out to deal with nature in more immediate, personal ways. Her goal as well as her subject was remembrance. Working from a New Yorker's first-hand experience of Hurricane Sandy, she reimagined, constructed, and juxtaposed sometimes idealized, sometimes rough, remnants of the havoc. The platform that supported these elements was a perfectly integrated sculpture of immense proportion made from raw wooden planks. It suggested a storm-tossed boat on which a collection of hand-crafted and carefully considered, highly stylized and mostly faux detritus had come to rest.

Gold-painted sticks in the prow poked through a higgledy-piggledy arrangement of plastic milk crates with mirrors inside. Curved sections of bark were lined with glitter, logs and branches were banded together with metal strips, and a grungy brown blanket revealed a silver underside. Next to leafless trees stuck together from miscellaneous sticks, framed photos depicted actual fallen trees. Every object, whether natural, constructed, or recycled, had been tweaked by Loeffe's hand. In one instance, tree root tips (real ones

Andrea Loeffe, *Homecoming*, 2013. Found tree branches and stumps, wood, ladders, chicken wire, traffic cones, photographs, plaster casts of tree branches, hardware, glitter, pigmented latex, pedestals, milk crates, mirrors, carpet, clamps, foam, mixed media, and painted water level on walls, 35 x 2.5 x 12 ft.



COURTESY THE ARTIST



Above and detail: Andrea Loeffe, *Homecoming*, 2013. Right: Donald Fodness, *Lamp of Lover's Uniforms*, 2014. Found objects and mixed media, detail of LUVRZ B H8RZ installation.

in this case) had tiny globs of moss added to them, unnatural in every way but exacting and engaging in visual detail.

A miniature plastic Christmas tree contrasted with small sticks mounted on vividly decorated bases. Short logs stood on end, their cut and sanded tops beautifully hand-painted like old blue and white china. Tall ladders and trees doubled as masts in more or less the correct places, while two kitschy lamps seemed to have survived the storm intact.

Homecoming inspired inspection from every angle, close-up and from a distance, but the view from the stern was particularly remarkable. Looking through the brightly lit layers of things packed along the 35-foot-long deck, one saw a varied, complex, and strikingly colored web. This dense network of miscellaneous flotsam was remarkably open, so that even individual items

on the distant prow came through as part of the overall picture.

An ambitious project, large in scale and beautiful in realization, this unified sculptural proposition was a groundbreaking adventure for Loeffe. The many dozens of objects on board, each a satisfying entity in its own right, contributed to the work's rich physical texture. This, joined with the underlying commentary on nature, destruction, and aftermath, coalesced into a visual experience of great clarity, power, and sensibility.

—Charles Boone

DENVER

Donald Fodness
Rude Gallery, Rocky Mountain College of Art

Viewers entered Donald Fodness's installation, *LUVRZ B H8RZ*, through a beaded curtain, the kind that separates one living space from another



in apartments too tiny to warrant full-fledged doors. If his title (lovers be haters) suggested the ambiguities of human relationships, the room itself was transformed into something equally equivocal—a slightly funny, slightly icky domestic setting.

LUVRZ B H8RZ was full of stuff. Two life-size, legless mannequins dominated the room, their torsos mounted on what could have been a gilded coat rack. A few worn rugs covered the floor. A large, tired-looking, mid-20th-century record console stood directly across from a video screen on which one could watch a wax peace symbol slowly disintegrate.

The far wall was spray-painted with "Raider H8RZ," intimating a certain amount of violence, which was reinforced by a hole punched through its surface as if by a fist. Reflecting the dichotomy inherent in the title, Fodness delicately arranged a row of green and orange glasses directly across the room. A blue plastic tarp hung overhead, next to a bare fluorescent fixture that highlighted two sculptures resting on top of the console below. These pieces, each approximately the size of a medium vase, were clearly gendered: one with five corn cob pipes in the shape of a smile; the other with six curled

fingers holding a series of coffee mugs. The male doubled as a planter, while the back of the female held a spice rack.

