

ARTnews

Alain Kirili

Terrazzo Art Projects

Arranged in niches, the eight small sculptures in this show, "Modeled and Forged 1980–2014," ran the gamut of the traditional mediums that the Post-Minimalist artist Alain Kirili has manipulated in nontraditional ways since the 1970s. Forceful modeling in wax, plaster, and terra-cotta has recently yielded to leaner, lighter works in wire through which space flows and shadows cast drawings on the wall. The latest work here was *Aria* (2014), a rapturous tangle of armature wire and rubber tubing. Fashioned on the spot and specifically for this gallery, the piece skimmed the surface of the wall, seemingly unfettered by gravity or any other force beyond internal torque.

Inspired by jazz, Kirili works quickly and unobsessively; the outcome, a sensuous marriage of intellect and instinct, preserves the vitality of the process. The artist's chief strength lies in the way he communicates energy through spontaneous gesture.

What keeps the work from looking hasty is Kirili's virtuosic sensitivity to form, grounded in decades of his thinking about the fundamentals of sculpture (mass, weight, dimension, and space). His practice rests on these observed principles. Formal integrity pervades even the most casual of his works—for example, in *Fa Presto* (2001), an abject mass of melted wax smolders like an imploded gargoyle. What is impressive about Kirili is not his spontaneity per se, but his complete trust that risk-taking will turn out well. It was a dimension of the show, curated by the abstract painter Christian Haub, that was especially exhilarating.

—Johanna Ruth Epstein



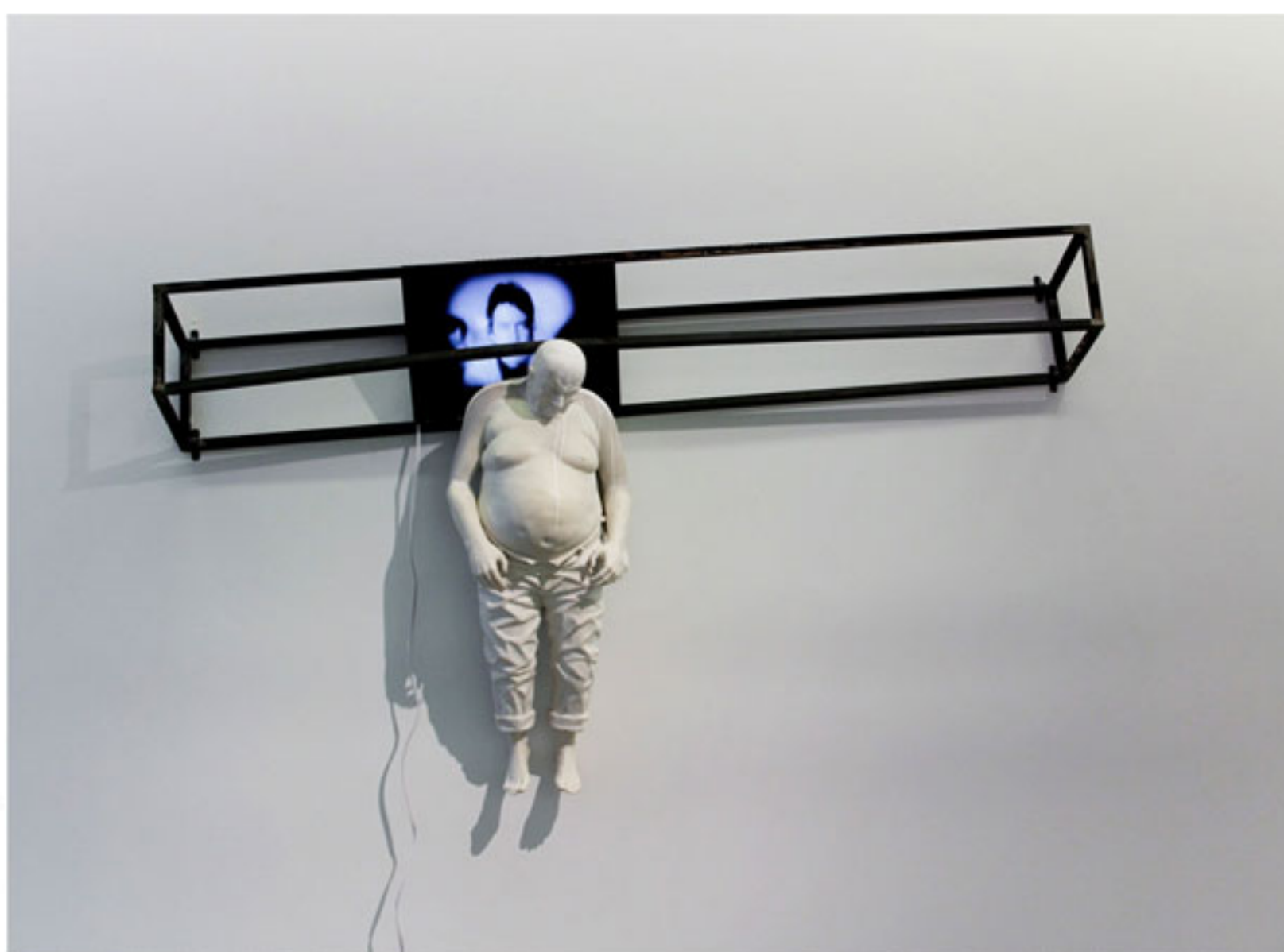
Alain Kirili, *Aria*, 2014, wire and rubber, 19" x 21". Terrazzo Art Projects.

Bernardi Roig

Claire Oliver

This small but powerful show of new drawings and sculpture by Bernardi Roig revolved around the theme of the decaying image, a process presented here as either subtle or aggressive, but always inexorable. Combining meticulous craftsmanship with uneasy references to art history, the artist proved himself deft with line and material as well as with concepts.

For instance, the 2013 series "Je est un autre" consists of two sets of charcoal drawings, one derived from Ingres's *Portrait of Monsieur Bertin*, the other from the 19th-century Spanish painter



Bernardi Roig, *The Invisibility of Memory*, 2012, polyester resin, marble dust, iron, TV, video, 13" x 66" x 9". Claire Oliver.

Federico de Madrazo's portrait *Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda*. The title—which might be translated as "I is an other"—is a quote from a letter Rimbaud wrote when he was 16, describing the dislocated psyche. Each set of drawings depicts the process by which the initial, realistic image is deformed into a grisly, marred, and macabre version of its original self, in the manner of a

Francis Bacon portrait.

The exhibition included two mixed-media sculptures. The first, *The Invisibility of Memory* (2012), combines a realistic white polyester-resin figure verging on the grotesque, a slightly askew minimalist iron structure, and a blurry black-and-white video seemingly extracted from a commercial film. Hung high on the wall, the figure was drooping, the structure bent, and the moving image elusive. Together they offered a powerful commentary on the exhaustion of the image in contemporary culture. The other sculpture, titled *THE MIRROR (exercises to be another)*, 2013, contains two white figures facing each other, one a deformed version of the other, staring into the glare

of a harsh bulb. Roig's use of powerful fluorescent bulbs reveals how light itself can blind as well as illuminate.

The show also included studies for the sculptures, drawn with white charcoal on black paper. These figurative renderings of the three-dimensional works were subjected to rough erasures and violent crossings-out, conveying an existential angst that would have been as comfortable in a Beckett play as in a Chelsea gallery.

—George Stolz