

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY



### ART TALK

#### The Artist as Magician and Trickster

TUE JAN 15, 2013

Host: [Edward Goldman](#)

Have you ever watched a magician perform an amazing trick and then, with confidence and even bravado, reveal the mechanisms behind his trick?

If that is not enough, he gives a repeat performance and, though now you know the secret, you still find yourself buying – wholeheartedly— into his magic once more.

Over the last weekend, I saw and admired the work of three artists, whom I would describe as magicians and tricksters.



(L) Jeff Koons, *Coloring Book*, 1997–2005, High chromium stainless steel with transparent color coating, Ed. 2/4.

(R) Jeff Koons, *Gorilla*, 2009–12, Black granite, Ed. 1/3.

Image courtesy of Gagosian Gallery, Photo by Douglas M. Parker Studio.

Upon entrance to Gagosian Gallery in Beverly Hills, you are confronted by two very large tour de force [sculptures by Jeff Koons](#). The first, in the shape of a standing gorilla, looks rather aggressive. Your first impression is that it's an oversized version of a child's toy, cast from cheap black plastic. When you learn that it's been carved from a single block of black granite and weighs several tons, you are filled with surprise and genuine wonderment at yet another successful trick from master magician Koons. But, unfortunately, this feeling doesn't last. His other sculpture on view, *Coloring Book*, is another matter. It appears to be made of translucent material –you could swear that your eye travels straight through – but you've been tricked! It's made of polished, reflective chrome, and even after you learn the true nature of the work, your eyes still can't believe what your brain tells you. This is the first time in many years that I have encountered a work by Jeff Koons that has fully engaged me.

456 NORTH CAMDEN DRIVE BEVERLY HILLS CA 90210 T. 310.271.9400 F. 310.271.9420

LOSANGELES@GAGOSIAN.COM WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY



*Frank Gehry, Untitled, 2012–13, Metal wire, ColorCore formica and silicone with wood base, © Frank Gehry, Image courtesy of Gagosian Gallery, Photography by Josh White/JWPictures.com.*

Truth be told, the main reason I went to the Gagosian was to see the exhibition of [new sculptures by Frank Gehry](#). Throughout his long, illustrious career as an architect, Gehry has never abandoned his passion for making sculptural objects. Here, in a large, darkened gallery, there are a dozen or so graceful (though far from precious) sculptures in the shape of twisting and flying fish, each one made from roughly broken pieces of formica. Each fish has a light inside it, so it can be used as a lamp. Expensive, a very expensive lamp indeed, but boy, it's worth it.

456 NORTH CAMDEN DRIVE BEVERLY HILLS CA 90210 T. 310.271.9400 F. 310.271.9420

LOSANGELES@GAGOSIAN.COM WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY



*Frank Gehry, Untitled (Los Angeles III), 2012–13, Metal wire, ColorCore formica and silicone, © Frank Gehry, Image courtesy of Gagosian Gallery, Photo by Benjamin Lee Ritchie Ha.*

There is a well-known story about Frank Gehry as a child, watching a live fish jump in the family bathtub before being cooked for the traditional Sabbath dinner. Some childhood impressions stay with us for a lifetime... If you have ever seen Gehry's Bilbao museum, you will recognize the reference to fish scales in its iridescent, titanium skin. This iconic building always makes me think of a beautiful mermaid emerging from the waters.

So, if you're in the mood for some smart, interesting tricks spiced with a little bit of magic, see the work of these three artists who, like the proverbial Magi, come bearing gifts."

456 NORTH CAMDEN DRIVE BEVERLY HILLS CA 90210 T. 310.271.9400 F. 310.271.9420

LOSANGELES@GAGOSIAN.COM WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM