Shows to See This Fall

By TED LOOS

Fall is a busy time of year for displays of art across museums, galleries and auction houses. Here are worthy shows of everything from ancient treasures to cutting-edge works, in all corners of the United States.

New England

BOSTON

“Ancient Nubia Now”
Through Jan. 20

While ancient Egyptian artifacts get a lot of attention in museums, those from Nubia — Egypt’s one-time rival and conqueror — get much less. But the residents of capitals known as Kerma, Napata and Meroe produced temples, palaces and pyramids filled with pottery, metalwork, furniture and sculpture. This selection of 400 Nubian works dates from 2400 B.C. to A.D. 300 and includes funerary figures, jewels worn by queens and a group of rare musical instruments. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, mfa.org

WORCESTER, MASS.

“With Child: Otto Dix/Carmen Winant”
Through Dec. 15

This high-concept show takes on the topic of pregnancy and birth by marrying work by Otto Dix (1891-1969), a revered German Expressionist whose scabrous portraits left an indelible record of the Weimar Republic, and Carmen Winant, a contemporary artist and writer. Ms. Winant, known for her large assemblages, was inspired by Mr. Dix’s “Pregnant Woman” (1931) to create a site-specific, multimedia installation, “Ha Hoo Ha Hoo … Hoo Ha Ha, Ha Hoo,” (2019), with about 480 found images. Worcester Art Museum, worcesterart.org

New York

“Rachel Feinstein: Maiden, Mother, Crone”
Nov. 1 to March 22

Rachel Feinstein, a busy midcareer artist, has won critical plaudits for her large aluminum sculptures that riff on the “garden follies” of the 18th and 19th centuries, and for her “Snow Queen” installation that took on the 1845 Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale. Now the artist — half of an art world power couple with the painter John Currin — is getting her first American museum retrospective, to feature her work across media, including a wall-relief that was commissioned for the show. Jewish Museum, thejewishmuseum.org

“Illusions of the Photographer: Duane Michals at the Morgan”
Through Feb. 2

Duane Michals is beloved for his work over the past six decades, particularly his black-and-white sequences with philosophical themes, like “The Spirit Leaves the Body.” At 87, he is getting his first New York museum retrospective, and one that will feature not only his work — including his recent ventures into video — but also his selection of work by others from the Morgan’s vaults. The trend of turning over museum attics to artist-curators has been gaining steam, and Mr. Michals is likely to provide surprises. The Morgan Library & Museum, themorgan.org

Aboriginal Art at Sotheby’s

Dec. 6 to 12

Sales of what is known as Aboriginal art have been conducted by Sotheby’s since 1997, but always in Australia and Europe. Now, the global auctioneer is conducting a New York sale of the category for the first time on Dec. 13. Works from the 18th century to the present day will go on the block, with some getting a week of display beforehand in the house’s Upper East Side headquarters. The sale features two works by Emily Kame Kngwarreye, an acclaimed Aboriginal artist, from the collection of Thomas Vroom. Sotheby’s, sothebys.com

“Félix Vallotton: Painter of Disquiet”
Oct. 29 to Jan. 26

A Swiss-born painter who moved to Paris at 16 to study and settled there, Félix Vallotton was part of Les Nabis, a group of young artists. But he never got the renown of Pierre Bonnard or Edouard Vuillard, two other members. So this exhibition of more than 80 works makes a case for giving him a closer look, from
his pioneering woodcuts to his 1907 rendering of Gertrude Stein. For the first time, that portrait will be hung next to Picasso’s 1905-6 version, from the Met’s collection. Metropolitan Museum of Art, metmuseum.org

Mid-Atlantic

PHILADELPHIA

“Off the Wall: American Art to Wear”
Nov. 10 to May 17

The generosity of collectors is ever more important to museums, as evidenced by the more than 130 works by 60 artists in this fashion show, which are mostly part of a promised gift by the former dealer Julie Schaller Dale to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Made between 1867 and 1997, the wearable, one-of-a-kind pieces reflected the notion that the body is a perfectly good canvas for art. And the exhibition is a counterpoint to the many brand-name fashion shows appearing in museums lately, given that many of the creators will be new names to visitors. Philadelphia Museum of Art, philmuseum.org

PHILADELPHIA

“30 Americans”
Through Jan. 12

Certain exhibitions get a reputation as being ahead of their time, and that is certainly true of this survey of work by 30 contemporary African-American artists that has been on tour since 2009. Curated by Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw — who was recently appointed senior historian and director of history, research and scholarship at the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery — the show is drawn from the famed Rubell Family Collection in Miami. It includes pieces by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Mark Bradford, Wangeci Mutu, Mickalene Thomas, Kara Walker and Kehinde Wiley. Barnes Foundation, barnesfoundation.org

WASHINGTON

“Alonso Berruguete: First Sculptor of Renaissance Spain”
Through Feb. 17

You can always count on the National Gallery to find an old master artist who deserves the spotlight. More than 40 works by Alonso Berruguete (1490-1561), the premier sculptor of Renaissance Spain, will go on view, with an emphasis on his retablos, or painted wood figures. Dramatic religious scenes, as with the stricken subjects depicted in “The Sacrifice of Isaac” (1526/1533), were his stock in trade. The son of a famous Spanish painter, Berruguete trained in Italy and returned to his home country to become a court painter, achieving riches and renown. National Gallery of Art, nga.gov

Mountain West

DENVER

“Claude Monet: The Truth of Nature”
Through Feb. 2

When you think Claude Monet, you think haystacks, water lilies and especially his garden in Giverny, France — the artist was one of the all-time greats when it comes to depicting outdoor scenes and the play of light in nature. His 1872 “Impression, Sunrise” helped give Impressionism its name (though the moniker was not a compliment at first). This crowd-pleasing show bills itself as the biggest United States exhibition of Monet’s paintings in 20 years, with more than 120 on view. At least two have a watery cast: “Boat Lying at Low Tide” (1881) and “The Canoe on the Epte” (circa 1890). Denver Art Museum, denverartmuseum.org

DENVER

“Francesca Woodman: Portrait of a Reputation”
Through April 5

In her short life, the photographer Francesca Woodman (1958-81) created a lasting body of work, especially her black-and-white self-portraits. This show mixes never-before-shown vintage prints by her own hand with images of the young artist at work and at play that were taken by George Lange, a friend from the Rhode Island School of Design. She was the daughter of artists, and her death by suicide at 22 has strongly colored history’s view of her. This show intends to round out impressions of her and her work. Museum of Contempory Art Denver, mcadenver.org

West Coast

SAN FRANCISCO

“Long Story Short”
Through Jan. 18

After staying in business for 40 years, a gallery deserves to take a victory lap. The longtime dealer Jeffrey Fraenkel has gathered around 60 works spanning the history of photography, from a 19th-century daguerreotype to cutting-edge recent images, to celebrate his longevity, and the medium’s. Works by Helen Levitt, Bereni...
ce Abbott, Romare Bearden, Alfred Stieglitz and Diane Arbus are included. One of the themes is how the boundaries between photography and other media have, over time, melted away. Best of all? Many of the works will be available for purchase. Fraenkel Gallery, fraenkelgallery.com

PALO ALTO, CALIF.
“Seeing Picasso: Maker of the Modern” Nov. 2 to Feb. 16
Picasso shows are not an everyday event in the Bay Area, so this presentation of more than 35 works by the beloved master is notable, indeed. The exhibition, observing the fifth anniversary of Pace Gallery’s Palo Alto space, was organized in collaboration with Spain’s Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte. It spans more than 70 years, including works from the famous Blue Period all the way to late canvases like “Head of Man” (1971). Pace Gallery, pacegallery.com

LOS ANGELES
“Julie Mehretu” Nov. 3 to May 17
The abstract painter Julie Mehretu has won her fair share of acclaim, including a MacArthur “genius” grant, but this is her first big midcareer survey at an American museum; next year, it moves to the Whitney Museum of American Art, which co-organized the survey. Ms. Mehretu — born in Ethiopia and raised in Michigan — addresses many topics in her complex, many-layered compositions, from diaspora to war and natural phenomena, and she can work as easily on huge canvases as she can on tiny pieces of paper. She is an artist who is closely watched by her peers. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, lacma.org

LOS ANGELES
“Unseen: 35 Years of Collecting Photographs” Dec. 17 to March 8
The Getty has one of the world’s very best photography collections, and to celebrate the department’s holdings, it offers what it calls a “curatorial mixtape” compiled by multiple staff members. Unlike the mixes you likely got in high school, it features works by Carrie Mae Weems, Anthony Hernandez, Mary Ellen Mark, William Eggleston, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Nan Goldin, Weegee and Dorothea Lange — and none of the approximately 200 works have ever been on view at the museum before. Getty Center, getty.edu

From the Capodimonte Museum*
Through Jan. 26
Fans of Renaissance and Baroque works are in luck, as 40 rarely seen works from those eras are making an appearance in the Pacific Northwest. The Capodimonte Museum in Naples, Italy, has never sent a tour of that size on the road, and it contains paintings by some of the all-time greats: Titian, El Greco, Jusepe de Ribera and Parmigianino among them. One anticipated highlight is “Judith and Holofernes” (1612-1617) by Artemisia Gentileschi — a dramatically rendered scene of an assassination. The show travels to the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth next year. Seattle Art Museum, seattleartmuseum.org

South

MIAMI
“Sterling Ruby” Nov. 7 to Feb. 2
The Los Angeles-based artist Sterling Ruby is perhaps best known for his large-scale installations, like the orange monolith “SPECTER,” which was shown at the biennial Desert X this past spring. But Ruby, like so many contemporary makers, refuses to pick one medium; he has also had a show of his ceramics at New York’s Museum of Arts and Design. This new solo survey exhibition will feature about 100 works by the wide-ranging artist. Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, icamiami.org

SARASOTA, FLA.
“Vik Muniz” Dec. 12 to March 1
About 16 years in the making, the Southwest Florida city of Sarasota is getting its first dedicated contemporary art institution, opening in December. Located in a three-building campus that includes a retrofitted Art Deco high school, the museum is starting with an exhibition that includes 100 works by the Brazilian photographer Vik Muniz. He is known for a sense of humor and for photographing elaborately constructed scenes: He once used Bosco chocolate syrup to recreate an image of Jackson Pollock as he painted. Sarasota Art Museum, sarasota.art

Midwest

CHICAGO
“Bauhaus Chicago: Design and the City” Nov. 23 to April 26
After the Nazis shut down Germany's famed art and design school, the Bauhaus, the educators had to go somewhere, and many of them went to Chicago. The New Bauhaus was founded in 1937, in a city that had already demonstrated its passion for great architecture with its embrace of the work of Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. The exhibition looks at the work of Nathan Lerner (he created the plastic honey bear dispenser), Dori Hahn Attschuler and others associated with the institution. Art Institute of Chicago, artic.edu

KANSAS CITY, MO.
“Access+Ability”
Through Feb. 9
Cutting-edge objects designed for people of a varying range of abilities are the focus of this show, from low-tech products like canes to a robotic dog used as a therapeutic device and even a shirt that allows the wearer to feel musical vibrations. The exhibition is co-organized with the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, and many of the more than 70 featured works have an interactive component. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, nelson-atkins.org

Southwest

HOUSTON
“Monet to Picasso: A Very Private Collection”
Through Jan. 12
Some of the works in this boutique blockbuster show have been seen before, but the American-based private collection of European masterworks has not been on view as a whole. It is always fun for the museumgoer to imagine what it must be like to own treasures like Paul Cézanne’s “Turning Road” (circa 1877) and Vincent van Gogh’s “Roofs” (1882). Would you hang them in the living room alongside Mary Cassatt’s “Jules Standing After His Bath” (1901)? Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, mfaht.org

DALLAS
“Speechless: Different by Design”
Nov. 10 to March 22
Five individual designers and one two-man team have created a series of site-specific commissions that offer new ways for museums to deliver sensory experiences. Ini Archibong developed an interactive sound installation called “Theoracle,” and Steven Ladd and William Ladd, brothers who create art, present “Scroll Space,” a piece composed of thousands of textile scrolls formed with the participation of people in underserved communities in Dallas and Atlanta (it was co-organized with Atlanta’s High Museum of Art). The show promises to be intense: It even features a “de-escalation” area between its sections. Dallas Museum of Art, dma.org

At left: unknown photographer, “Untitled [Opened by Mistake],” 1955, on view at the Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco.
Top right: Reginald Malcolmson, “Hall of Sport and Culture,” 1971/74, part of “Bauhaus Chicago: Design in the City” at the Art Institute of Chicago.

