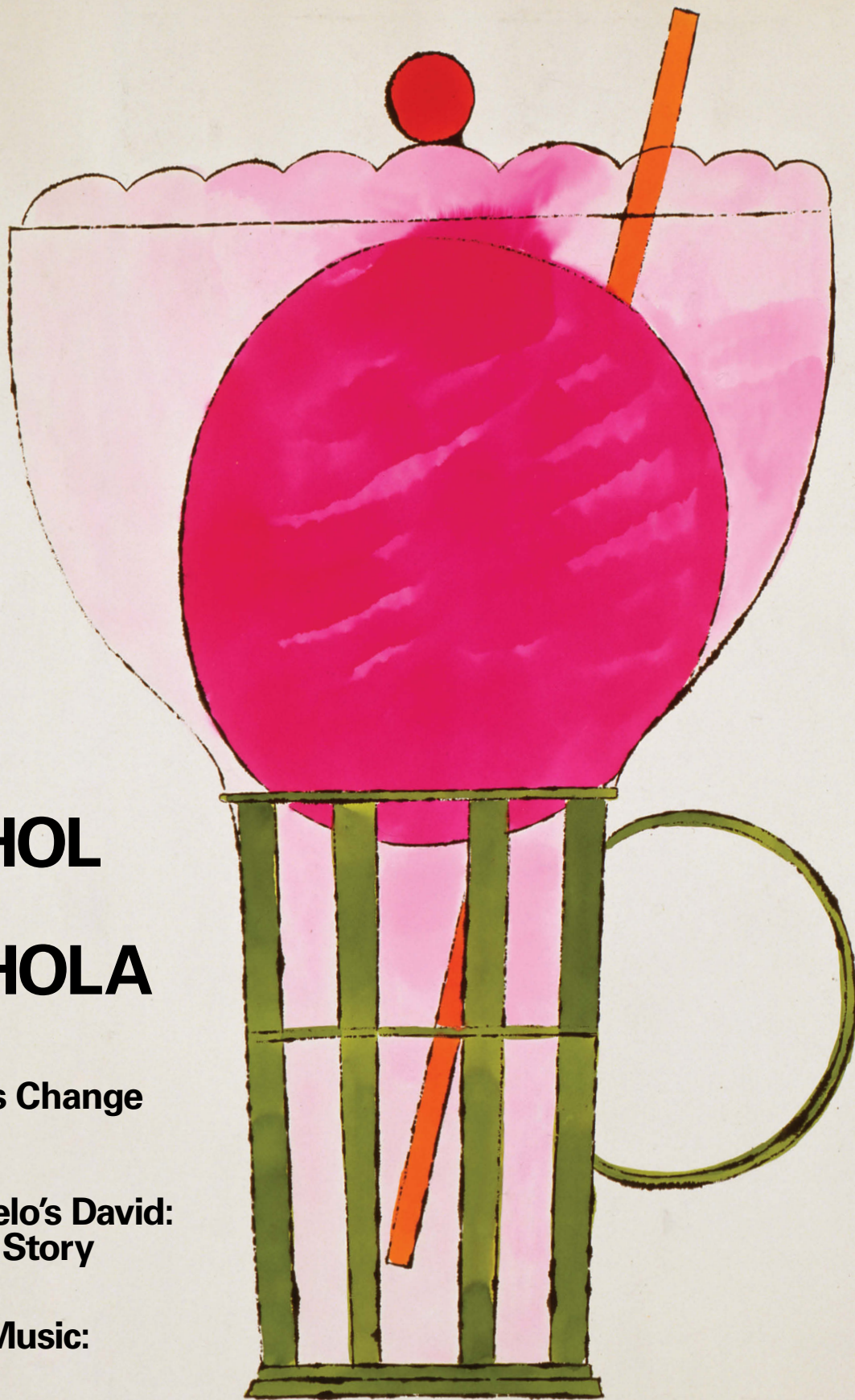# ARTnews

When WARHOL Was WARHOLA

Can Artists Change the World?

Michelangelo's David: The Inside Story

Artists & Music: Tuning In

John Bowman

Winston Wächter Fine Art

Having spent much of his time in Manhattan, painter John Bowman is no stranger to the cityscape. But the locales he captures in his latest series of paintings don't show bustling boulevards or crowded corners so popular throughout art history. Rather, he offers a fresh take on the genre, portraying densely packed clusters of dwellings stacked up tightly. They are not chic Modernist skyscrapers, but stucco buildings coated in creamy shades of white, pink, tan, burnt umber, terra-cotta, and gray.

The structures, which often look as though they are perched on a hill, evoke neighborhoods in San Francisco. But actually the paintings depict nonspecific sites drawn from the artist's memories of places like Turkey, Albania, Egypt, and Eastern Europe. Aside from an arch, a crescent, or an awning here or there, indicating a certain exoticism, there are no indicators of actual locations.

Devoid of signage, people, streets, cars, and other cultural clues as to time and place, these images are more about geometry and rhythmic dynamism—the way the buildings' shapes and colors interact to keep our eyes moving. Bowman seems less interested in representation than in formally conjuring our experience of architecture filling up space. He reduces windows, walls, rooftops, and doors to their most basic configurations. In paintings such as *Heights 1* (2013), the city becomes an almost abstract grid of planes, rectangles, and squares.

Bowman's works are neither frenzied nor claustrophobic; rather, they are quiet, even calm. The artist softens his edges and angles with the kind of diffuse sunlight that pours through moist air, and the result is surprisingly gentle and uplifting. —*Meredith Mendelsohn*

Phanos Kyriacou

Maccarone

For his debut show in New York, "view to river from north," Cypriot artist Phanos Kyriacou rose to a characteristic challenge he set for himself: to create a charged situation within a white-box setting. Gathering found objects and handmade carvings on plywood platforms and framing open space with steel
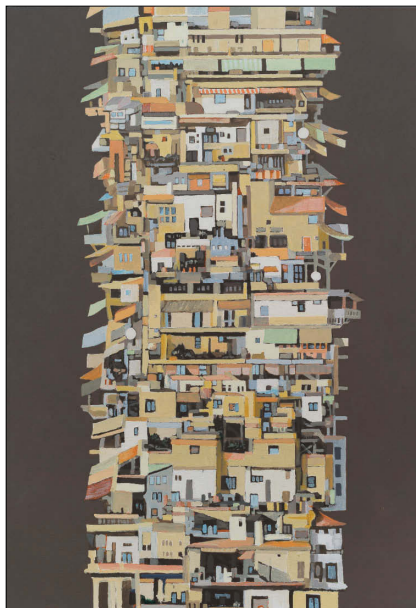
John Bowman, *Tower*, 2013, oil and acrylic on canvas, 52" x 36". Winston Wächter Fine Art.

structures, the artist took viewers on a journey that might conceptually have extended from the island of Cyprus to the Hudson River.

Kyriacou, who uses modest and insignificant materials to create interventions in his native landscape, here evoked a craftsman's workshop with three plywood platforms in a series titled "Taxonomic Possibilities" (2013). Two of the platforms rested on the floor and one sat on a tabletop, showcasing items ranging from rocks that he'd found at the side of a road and encased in bronze to small wood maquettes fashioned by local Cypriot artisans, as well as rough-hewn plaster shapes, a desiccated orange, and the skin of a coconut shell.

Kyriacou tinkers with viewers' perceptions of the architecture of a given space. In one untitled work from 2013, he coated one of the gallery's industrial columns with white plaster to form an ellipse. In another, *Inanimated Negotiation* (2013), he framed a corner of the room with an arc of steel featuring a perpendicular entryway at the work's midpoint. In so doing, Kyriacou created the illusion of an interior, despite the fact that the work has no doors or walls, thereby disorientating his viewers.

Tying these elements together was a quartet of videos playing on monitors placed on the gallery floor. These videos included *River* (2013), a meditative look at stones forming patterns in a river, appearing and disappearing as waves hit the shore. Together these works offered a refreshing, contemplative take on matters of cultural identity and art.

—*Barbara Pollack*

Phanos Kyriacou, Rear: *Inanimated Negotiation*, 2013, metal, 90½" x 165⅜" x 26".
Front: *Here to There*, 2013, plywood bench, white oak, and treated found object, 96" x 24½" x 11½". Maccarone.