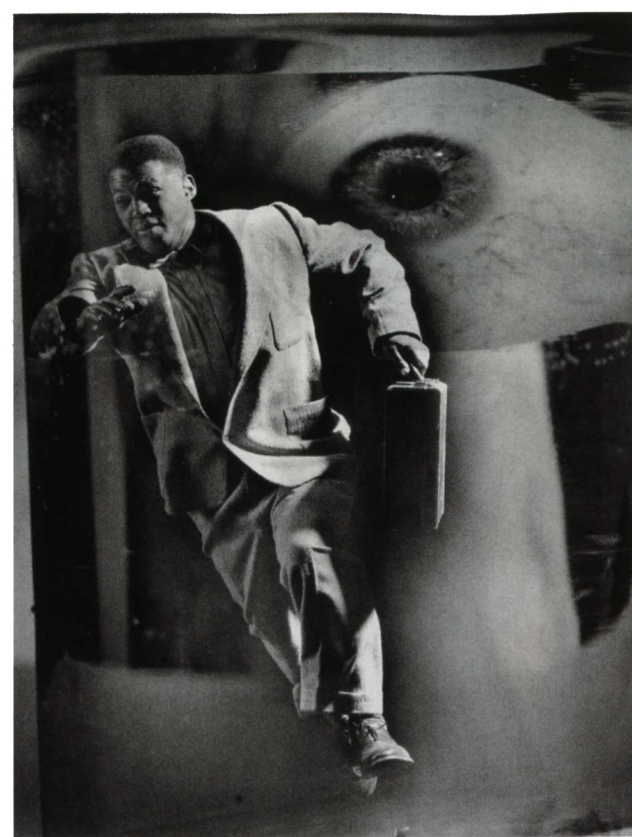


Below: Lee Kit, *His right hand is holding something*, 2015, acrylic, emulsion paint, ink-jet print, and pencil on cardboard, towel, 23 3/4 x 48". Right: Gordon Parks, *Untitled, Harlem, New York, 1952*, gelatin silver print, 13 1/4 x 10 1/4".



CHICAGO

SAINT LOUIS

MINNEAPOLIS

“INVISIBLE MAN: GORDON PARKS AND RALPH ELLISON IN HARLEM”

Art Institute of Chicago

May 21–August 28

Curated by Michal Raz-Russo

“Invisible Man” traces the artistic collaborations between photographer Gordon Parks and novelist Ralph Ellison (an avid recreational photographer who utilized photographic metaphors in his writing) via forty-five photographs; numerous related objects, including archival manuscripts; and an insightful catalogue. The show foregrounds their unpublished pictorial essay from 1948, “Harlem Is Nowhere,” which frames images of the neighborhood as both “document and symbol.” This collaboration focused on Harlem’s free, nonsegregated mental health clinic, which Ellison described as “a three-color camera capable of overlaying multiple dimensions of experience.” Also included is Parks’s photographic essay for *Life*, “A Man Becomes Invisible,” 1952, a striking series of surrealistic images that matched the emotional tenor of Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, published that same year. Illuminating both the parallels and divergences between Parks’s and Ellison’s work, this show promises a new perspective on the pair’s joint use of photography during the civil rights movement, a period of heightened attention to the rhetoric of images.

—Solveig Nelson

“MARK BRADFORD: RECEIVE CALLS ON YOUR CELLPHONE FROM JAIL”

Contemporary Art Museum

May 6–August 14

Curated by Jeffrey Uslip

The museum debut of Mark Bradford’s *Receive Calls on Your Cellphone from Jail*, 2013, an expansive installation of mixed-media paintings featuring text that evokes the roadside signage advertising bail bonds and the like, reflects on the rule that prohibits inmates from placing collect calls to cell phones. Originally mounted in 2013 as a set of 150 panels that covered all four walls of a nine-by-nine-by-nine-foot gallery at White Cube, London, the work will be reconceived for this occasion as a grid of thirty-eight panels on one wall, arranged in two horizontal rows in a sixty-foot span. This show thus extends the artist’s trenchant critiques of the built environment into the bleak landscape of the American prison complex. Representing less the jail cell’s infrastructure than its indignities—particularly that which circumscribes the daily experience of the incarcerated—it also, somewhat more than implicitly, critiques a system in which blacks are jailed at six times the rate of whites.

—Suzanne Hudson

“LEE KIT: HOLD YOUR BREATH, DANCE SLOWLY”

Walker Art Center

May 12–October 9

Curated by Misa Jeffereis and Siri Engberg

Doing humble things to humble objects is at the heart of Hong Kong-born, Taiwan-based Lee Kit’s practice. Lee’s first solo museum exhibition in the United States surveys a decade of the artist’s understated investigations of the expanding contiguity between art and everyday life. Spanning a diverse range of media, from modest configurations of handpainted cardboard supports to a thirteen-channel video installation of stacked monitors depicting common household products (*I can’t help falling in love*, 2012), the show demonstrates Lee’s foregrounding of the nondescript as central to what makes lived experience so psychologically specific. Especially compelling is the artist’s engagement with scale, both in terms of the relationships created through the juxtaposition of differently sized objects and the frameworks of spatial organization to which he (and we) are persistently, and often irrevocably, subject.

—Joan Kee