

ARTNEWS

MICHELLE SEGRE AT ROSENWALD-WOLF GALLERY, PHILADELPHIA

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Installation view of "Sectional Planes and Driftloaves: Michelle Segre," 2016, showing, from left, *Untitled (Red Triangle)*, 2016, and *Porous, Porous*, 2014.

Encountering Michelle Segre's sculptures in Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery at the University of the Arts is like going to an opening and finding yourself in the presence of a few eccentric fashionistas who clearly went through their closets (and probably their kitchens and bathrooms) to come up with head-turning outfits. They — the sculptures, I mean — succeed brilliantly.

Red Desert, from 2016, one of the newest works here (the majority date from 2015), sets the tone. A large triangular armature encompassing an erratically woven web of tautly strung lengths of red yarn sits atop a metal pole that's stuck in a chunk of plaster dripped with ultramarine-blue paint (another pole behind the triangle appears to be holding it up). Thin, artfully bent wires attached to the edge of the triangle extend upward and are topped with orange and green Ocelo-brand sponges mounted sideways, like pedestals. The overall effect of this entirely abstract work is of a formerly grand figure—male or female—who has fallen on hard times but hasn't lost his or her sense of style.

Segre's sculptures also suggest hybrids of other sculptors' works. Joan Miró is the obvious touchstone. His colors, whimsy, use of space and line, and references to human forms in his paintings and sculptures are evident in most of Segre's sculptures, though hers are the odd, misfit cousins to Miró's more polished works. *Foot of the Grimey*, *Pourous*, *Porous*, and *Plaza* all borrow from Miró, but Segre's exaggerations, deliberate messiness, and use of everyday materials (painted slices of bread are a constant) take them more into the realm of Franz West.

A group of tabletop sculptures from Segre's "Driftloaf" series, many of which feature an irregular, hole-filled slice of painted bread at the top that suggests an animal or human head, demonstrate her humor and her ability to make the most of commonplace materials. Remember those ceramic cats with elongated necks from the 1950s? In *Driftloaf Driftwood*, Segre creates one her way, with a brick, a piece of driftwood, and a slice of bread with two pointed corners turned upward.



Michelle Segre, *Driftloaf (Green with Square Holes)*, 2015, concrete, papier-mâché, paint, and bread, 19 x 7 x 3 inches.