

# Weekend Arts II

The New York Times

## Art in Review

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### Nancy Shaver

'Dress the Form'

Derek Eller

300 Broome Street,  
Lower East Side  
Through Aug. 19

One of the agreeable surprises in Robert Gober's 2014 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art was the inclusion of other artists, among them Nancy Shaver, who was represented by a room of banal black-and-white photographs from the late 1970s. Ms. Shaver is more of a sculptor now, or a curator of objects. She runs an antique shop in Hudson, N.Y., called Henry, whose website description feels suspiciously like a conceptual art work. It says that "objects at Henry are specifically chosen for their visual qualities, color shape, form, texture" and "the belief that almost anything can be decorative in a specific setting."

Ms. Shaver's exhibition "Dress the Form" at Derek Eller follows the same conceptual shoplike plan. There is a wall-size installation of fabrics, furniture and other objects squished together salon style, or what old-school art historians called horror vacui to describe an aversion to empty space. Other works are made



NANCY SHAVER, DEREK ELLER GALLERY

Nancy Shaver's "A Combination," 2016, includes wooden blocks, dress fabric and an afghan from Home Depot.

with found objects like trousers, a blanket (specifically, "an afghan from Home Depot") and plastic children's toys.

The work has a Cubist quality, too. Ms. Shaver likes cubes; she uses that form throughout her sculptures. But many works here actually look Cubist. This makes perfect sense since Picasso and Braque were among the first

artists to use mass-produced fabric and wallpaper in their collages and to explore the complex pleasures of shopping and consumption. They, too, felt that anything could be decorative (or art) in a specific setting and applied that logic to their work, as Ms. Shaver does with skill and aplomb.

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