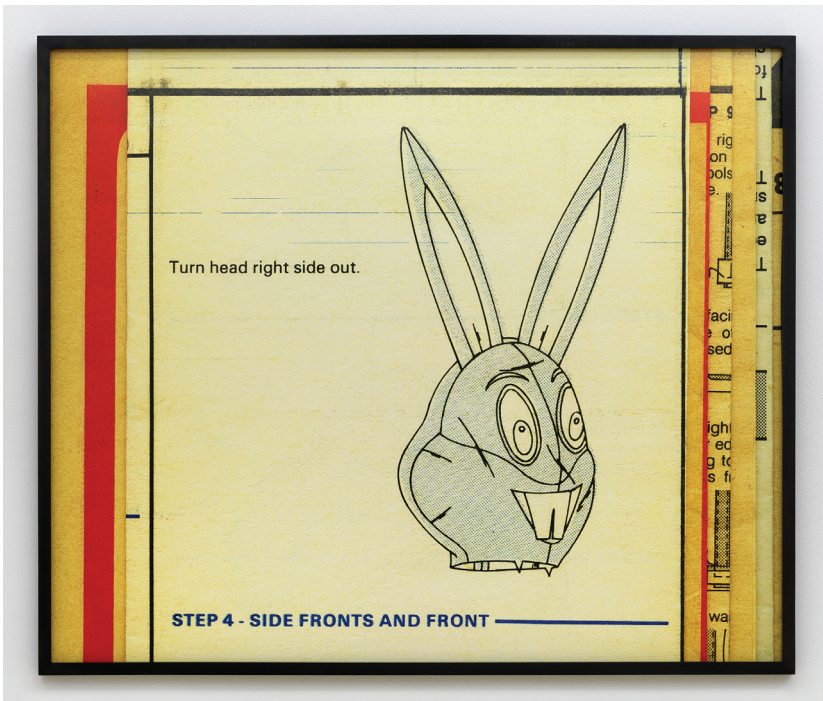


Martha Schwendener, "What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week," *The New York Times*, January 30 2019

The New York Times

What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week



Erica Baum's "Turn Head Right Side Out," an archival pigment print from 2018, in the exhibition "A Long Dress" at Bureau.

Erica Baum

Erica Baum has been included in several exhibitions devoted to abstract photography, but this is misleading. Ms. Baum actually photographs concrete objects but presents them from unfamiliar angles, perspectives or distances so that the images appear abstract. She shows how the edges of a book, fragments of text or sewing patterns from the last century, displayed in her current show — "A Long Dress" at Bureau — offer a wealth of information that initially seems like innocent or irrelevant minutiae.

The sewing patterns are captured with such detail that you can see their fibrous texture; they resemble fabric rather than photographic prints. With their red, green and black lines and numbers blown up in the images, some like "Edges Fold Fold" look like abstract geometric paintings from the early 20th century.

Texts and direction lines on the patterns offer instructions about the alignment of busts, waists and shoulders. One pattern, for a bunny costume, orders you to "turn head right side out," pushing the show into a kind of surreal post-human zone. The exhibition's title, "A Long Dress," comes from Gertrude Stein's prose-poem "Tender Buttons," a contemplation of everyday objects. It adds to the sense that you're reading poetry rather than viewing templates contributing to a uniform language about human forms.

Ms. Baum's work can be read through various filters, including conceptual photography and the philosopher Michel Foucault's "Discipline and Punish" (1975), a classic text on the institutional policing of bodies. The sewing pattern, with its basic lines and neutral color, seems like a bland and simple thing, but Ms. Baum reminds us that the devil is in taking such details for granted.

MARTHA SCHWENDENER