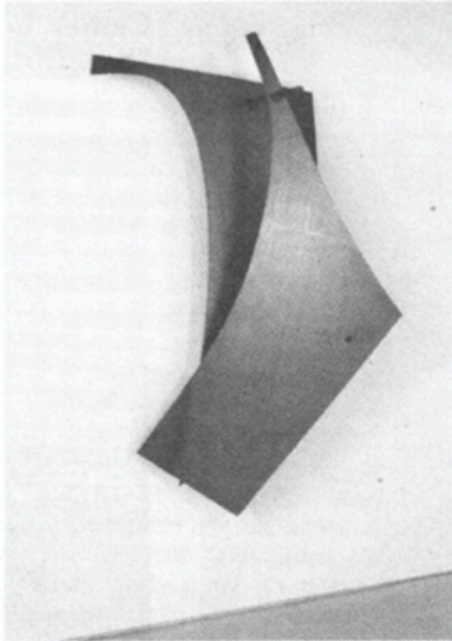


The New York Times

Art in Review



JOHN BERENS, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST
AND LISA COOLEY, NEW YORK

Erin Shirreff's "Drop (no. 1)"
(2013), raw hot-rolled steel.

Erin Shirreff

'Day Is Long'

Lisa Cooley
107 Norfolk Street, near Delancey
Street
Lower East Side
Through Sunday

Erin Shirreff can do a lot with just a little material, whether it's a scrap from her studio floor or an inadequate photograph of a sculpture that should be seen in person. In this very polished show, her second at the Lisa Cooley gallery, she uses these things as a sort of wedge to get at the space between mediums.

The works include sculptures, photographs and two videos, which share a mostly abstract vocabulary. Most prominent are the sculptures "Drop (no. 1)" and

"Drop (no. 3)," which are made of thin sheets of hot-rolled steel but based on little bits of cut paper left over from collages. They're narrow, sensuous and forbiddingly sharp-edged; one looks like a guillotine crossed with a scimitar.

Echoing the sculptures' vertical thrust is the video "Strip," projected on a long, double-sided screen. The camera speeds along the edges of a dark photograph, making it look like an inky waterfall. We never find out what, if anything, is pictured.

The subject of "Medardo Rosso, Madame X," a second video shown in the back room, is explicitly clear: it's a late-19th-century sculpture of a woman's head, with mysteriously eroded features. Working with a black-and-white catalog reproduction, Ms. Shirreff reprinted the image on different kinds of paper and photographed those prints under the glare of hand-held lights (much as she did with photographs of James Turrell's "Roden Crater," in a work from 2009). She then sequenced the photographs into a video so that Madame X, illuminated from various angles, appears almost animate.

Like many artists before her, Rosso and Brancusi among them, Ms. Shirreff knows that the interstices between sculpture and photography are strange, mystical places.

KAREN ROSENBERG