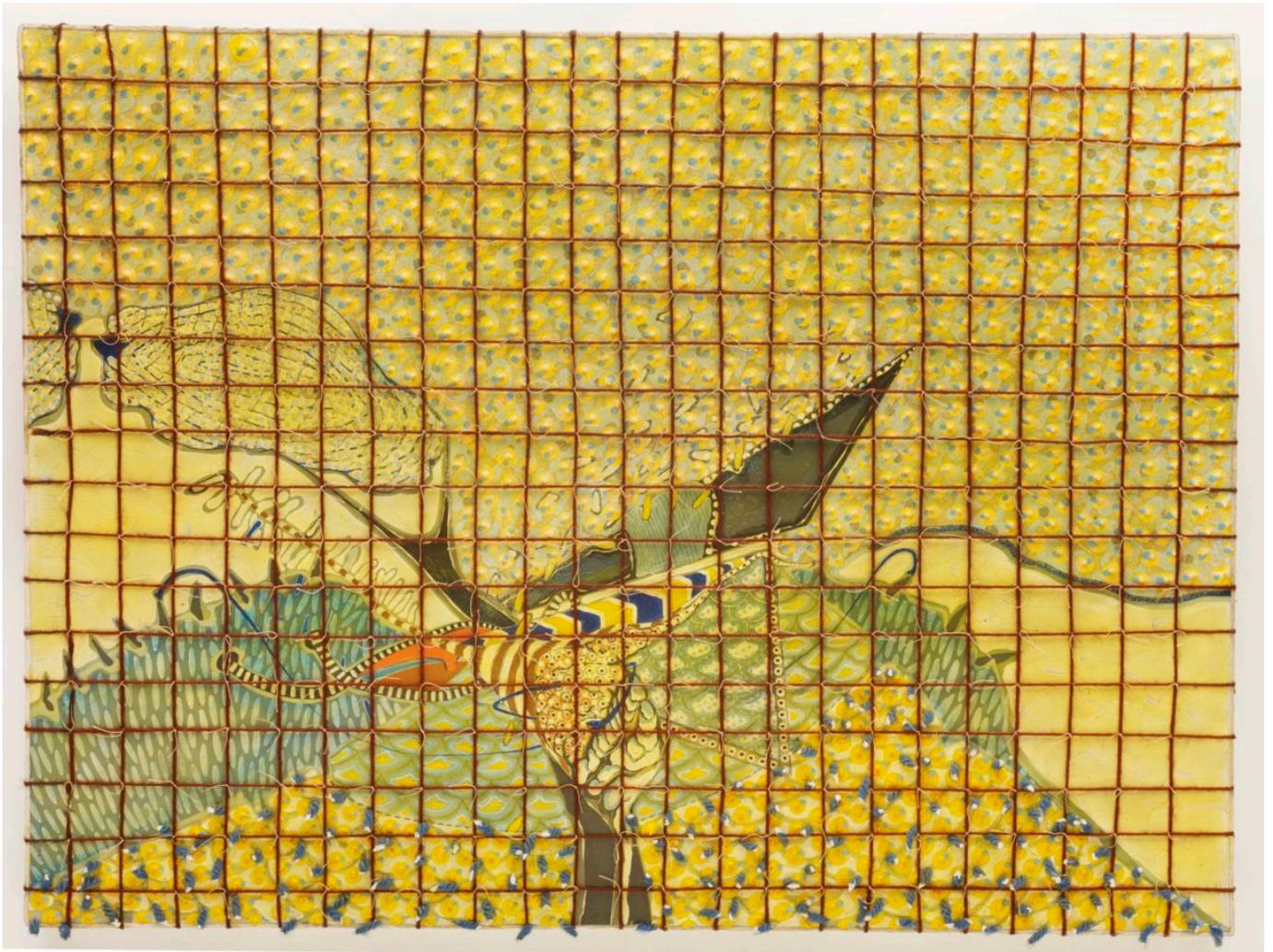


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LA's Best Shows Were Found Beyond the Museums

The real action was found in the commercial galleries



Franklin Williams, *Untitled* (1967). From "Dilexi Gallery: Seeking the Unknown".

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The museum landscape in Los Angeles is set to look very different over the next couple of years. Already, [LACMA](#) has shuttered its collection galleries as construction continues on its new building, scheduled to [open in 2024](#). Admission fees

will be a thing of the past at [LA MoCA](#) by January, which should have a marked impact on attendance. And two major openings are in the works: the [Academy Museum of Motion Pictures](#) is scheduled to open its doors next year while the [Lucas Museum of Narrative Art](#), founded by the film-maker [George Lucas](#), is anticipated to open in 2021.

But this year, the real action was found in the commercial galleries. Aside from a few noble exceptions, including the retrospective of [Lari Pittman](#)'s work at [the Hammer](#) ("[Declaration of Independence](#)", until 5 January 2020) and "[With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985](#)" at [MoCA](#), the most exciting exhibitions were not in the museums.

Major, multi-city galleries including [Matthew Marks](#) and [Hauser & Wirth](#) have refused to patronize LA with second-tier shows (as cynics expected they might), while hometown players like [Parker Gallery](#) and [Nonaka-Hill](#) have contributed to the ongoing education of the city's art lovers. Here are my picks of the best shows of 2019—any of which would have been a credit to the institutions. **J.G.**