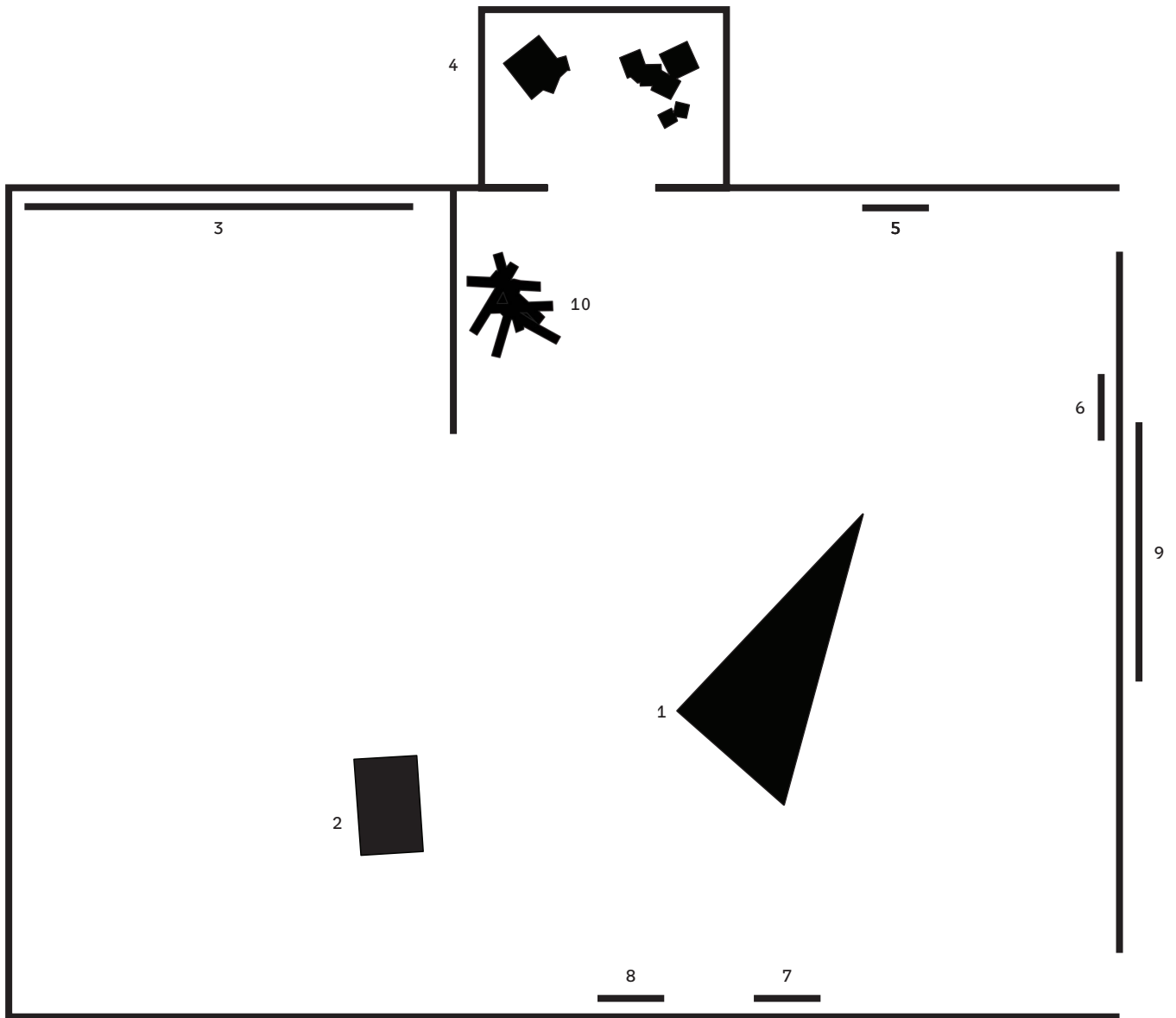


Barbara Kasten: Scenarios

October 16, 2020–April 4, 2021



1 Scenario 2015

HD video, color, silent, loop with constructed corner, large-scale cubes, plaster, paint, Masonite
3:38 min
108 x 144 x 216 in (274.3 x 365.8 x 548.6 cm)

2 Crossover (Aspen) 2016/2020

HD video, color, silent loop, Plexiglas, paper
96 x 67 1/5 x 43 1/5 in (243.8 x 170.7 x 109.7 cm)

3 Sideways 2015

Digital video installation, color, silent, looped
3:30 min

4 Corners 2020

Acrylic
69 in w x 138 in d (175.25 x 350.5 cm)

5 Progression Fifteen 2019

Digital chromogenic print, fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142 x 19 cm)

6 Progression Fourteen 2019

Digital chromogenic print, fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142 x 19 cm)

7 Progression Seventeen 2020

Digital chromogenic print, fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142 x 19 cm)

8 Progression Sixteen 2020

Digital chromogenic print, fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142 x 19 cm)

9 Elevation 2020

Pink acrylic mirror
105 x 208 1/2 x 5 1/8 in (266.7 x 529.6 x 13 cm)

10 Parallels I 2017

Fluorescent acrylic
Approx: 32 x 98 x 96 in (81.5 x 249 x 244 cm)

Since the 1970s, American artist Barbara Kasten has created photographs and sculptural installations that play with our sense of perception and explore the interchange of light, shadow, color, and form. Though initially trained in painting and textiles Kasten is best known for abstract photographs in which she investigates the mechanics of photography and the visual experience of constructed space.

Notable influences on Kasten's work include the modernist architecture of her native city of Chicago, Constructivism, Minimalism, and the interdisciplinary approach of the Bauhaus, a German art school active from 1919–33 whose pedagogy encouraged experimentation. The school emphasized aesthetic value in everyday objects and the combination of craft and fine art, widely impacting international architecture and design. Kasten intersected with several Bauhaus-trained makers, including her early textile professor Trude Guermonprez, as well as artist, designer, and architect Herbert Bayer. Bayer played a critical role in the founding and development of modern Aspen from 1946–75, working on numerous architectural, planning, and design projects—Kasten visited him in his Montecito home in the 1970s. The experimental, interdisciplinary mode of artmaking introduced by the Bauhaus profoundly affected Kasten's work, which resonates with Aspen's architectural history.

In recent years, Kasten has worked increasingly with mapping video projections and acrylic forms, creating vibrant installations

that combine sculpture and video to explore the three-dimensional, constructed space that was the hallmark of her earlier photographic work. As in her photographs, the videos record analogue objects in space, translating acrylic shapes and painted wood forms into moving image projections. The exhibition includes three major sculptural video installations, which use light, space, movement, and architecture grounded in materiality to play with notions of perception. This exhibition also includes examples from Kasten's recent series *Progressions* (2017 onward) in which the artist affixes fluorescent acrylic shapes to the surfaces of her face-mounted photographs. The site-specific work *Elevation* (2020), installed outside of the gallery, interacts with AAM architect Shigeru Ban's exterior woven facade that wraps around the museum.

Scenarios marks the first museum exhibition in the United States to include three of the artist's ambitious video installations, making it the most comprehensive presentation of Kasten's sculptural and video work to date. The exhibition celebrates Kasten's expansive output through which the artist extends her exploration of spatial constructions into the viewers' space and experience.

Barbara Kasten (b. 1936, lives and works in Chicago)

This publication accompanies Barbara Kasten's exhibition *Scenarios* and was curated by AAM Curator at Large Max Weintraub, on view in Gallery 1 at the Aspen Art Museum from October 16, 2020 to April 4, 2021.

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Exhibition Checklist

Sideways 2015
Digital video installation,
color, silent, looped
3:30 min

The video installation *Sideways* engages with the architecture of the gallery, casting slow-moving swaths of light and shadow onto the walls. The projected black-and-white video calls to mind architectural forms, even as they move and disappear across the space. While Kasten's works take on multiple reference points, this work in particular evokes abstract, experimental film, such as prominent Bauhaus artist László Moholy Nagy's *Light Prop for an Electric Stage* (1930).

Scenario 2015
HD video, color, silent, loop
with constructed corner,
large-scale cubes, plaster,
paint, Masonite
3:38 min
108 x 144 x 216 in (274.3 x
365.8 x 548.6 cm)

In *Scenario*, Kasten maps a video projection onto a set of large-scale cubes and a freestanding wall. While the artist has built an intricate set on one side of the work, in walking around it, viewers are also confronted with its theatrical support structure. Much of the artist's practice take on multilayered

dimensions—she constructs and photographs intricate sets. With this work, Kasten foregrounds the illusions of the stage.

Crossover (Aspen) 2016/2020
HD video, color, silent loop,
Plexiglas, paper
96 x 67 1/5 x 43 1/5 in (243.8
x 170.7 x 109.7 cm)

Crossover (Aspen) is a freestanding installation that combines a hanging paper screen, abstract video projection, and Plexiglas structure. Combining flat 2-dimensional video with 3-dimensional sculpture in the middle of the gallery, Kasten continues to explore—and deconstruct—the illusory nature of her compositions.

Progression Fourteen 2019
Digital chromogenic print,
fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142
x 19 cm)

Progression Fifteen 2019
Digital chromogenic print,
fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142
x 19 cm)

Progression Sixteen 2020
Digital chromogenic print,
fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142
x 19 cm)

Progression Seventeen 2020
Digital chromogenic print,
fluorescent acrylic
56 x 56 x 7 1/2 in (142 x 142
x 19 cm)

In her *Progression* series, Kasten uses fluorescent Plexiglas fragments to construct abstract, almost painterly sculptures. Layering these bright geometric forms reveal new interplay between planes of color, light, and shadow. The shadows cast on the wall, which Kasten deems “temporary photograms,” are an extension of the work itself.

Elevation 2020
Pink acrylic mirror
105 x 208 1/2 x 5 1/8 in
(266.7 x 529.6 x 13 cm)

Constructed from pink mirrored acrylic, the work *Elevation* responds to its site-specific placement in the space outside the gallery. Kasten's work not only reflects the elements of Shigeru Ban's AAM, but also echoes it. *Elevation's* undulating, repeating forms are a subtle nod to Ban's woven facade as well as Kasten's early training in weaving and textiles.

Corners 2020
Acrylic
69 in w x 138 in d (175.25 x
350.5 cm)

In *Corners*, Kasten balances a set of three-sided corners atop one another. Like *Elevation*, the work responds to, and integrates with, the building's architecture. Kasten incorporates Aspen's natural light into the work, anticipating the patterned shadow cast by the museum's facade. Just as the woven grid repeats itself, so too the constructed forms proliferating the alcove.

Parallels I 2017
Fluorescent acrylic
Approx: 32 x 98 x 96 in (81.5
x 249 x 244 cm)

In *Parallels I*, the artist presents a precariously stacked set of seven geometric tubular forms. The translucent acrylic allows viewers to see through the material, adding an element of light and shadow that extends beyond the sculptural material onto the gallery floor.

All works courtesy the artist and Bortolami Gallery, New York