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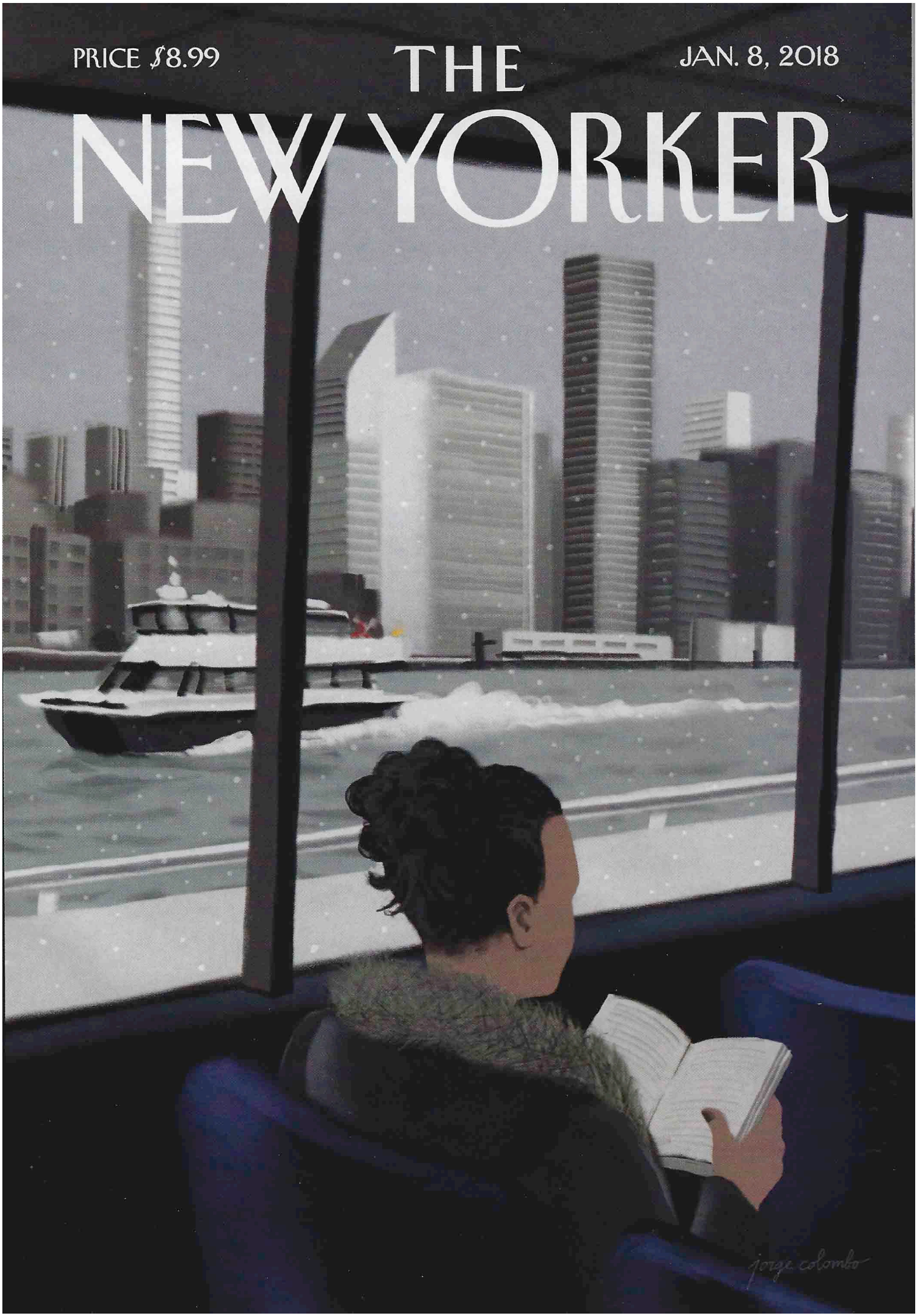

which was smuggling several hundred migrants into the United States, ran aground near Rockaway Beach; many of its passengers spent years in prison. Working in the folk-art tradition of *zhezhi*, the detainees created these often playful, sometimes wistful works to reflect their histories and aspirations. A group of bright sailboats—their hulls composed of meticulously folded yellow paper from legal pads supplied by their pro-bono attorneys—bear such glad tidings as "Love" and "Beauty." Several bald eagles, arranged before a banner that reads "Freedom," convey the hopeful adoption of American symbols. Wall texts and videos make deft use of these sculptures as springboards for a larger discussion of immigration policy. Though President Clinton released the final Golden Venture migrants in 1997, the artists featured here chose to remain anonymous, because, after decades, their legal status in the U.S. remains uncertain. *Through March 25.*

Queens Museum
"Patty Chang: The Wandering Lake"
Since the nineteen-nineties, the American artist has been investigating gendered family roles and stereotypes of Asian femininity in deadpan and visually lush performance-based work. In this sprawling, essayistic exhibition, which encompasses video, installation, photography, and sculpture, Chang documents her travels to China, Fogo Island, and the fast-shrinking Aral Sea. Bleak landscapes illustrate catastrophic geopolitical shifts and provide poetic backdrops for momentous personal events. In large projections, we watch Chang wash an abandoned fishing boat and the corpse of a whale; in a video titled "Que Sera, Sera," which is more intimate in both size and tone, she sings to her infant son in a hospital room where her father lies dying. Accompanying a three-part lecture-performance, which incorporates footage from a trip along the South-to-North Water Diversion Project, in China, are dozens of handblown glass objects that the artist calls "urinary devices," absurdist riffs on the plastic bottles she had to use as portable urinals during her journey. The piece epitomizes Chang's gift for breathing humor into her rebellious takes on profound, even heartbreaking, subjects. *Through Feb. 18.*

Studio Museum in Harlem
"Fictions"
This lively exhibition, the museum's fifth in a series of surveys of new tendencies in art, presents nineteen emerging artists of African descent. As the title suggests, many works imagine fantastic or speculative worlds. The painter Christina Quarles depicts a surreal scene in which slumbering figures occupy parallel planes of existence, delineated by contrasting patterns. Michael Demps's nearby sculpture—a tilted obelisk supported by scaffolding—is inspired by medieval alchemy; its rough, gray surface of candle wax and electromagnetic crystals will morph in response to sound waves and humidity during the show. A few installation works stand out as anchors, including Allison Janae Hamilton's immersive "Foresta," which conjures a mythical wood with birch logs, horsehair, and a video of raindrops projected onto a wall of tambourines. In Paul Stephen Benjamin's "God Bless America," dozens of stacked monitors flash, playing video clips including Aretha Franklin singing at Jimmy Carter's Inauguration and Lil Wayne's "God Bless Amerika" video, from 2015, a desolate riff on the original song. Benjamin's layered meditation on the African-American experience implies that the "fiction" may be that of social progress. *Through Jan. 7.*

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

"All Good Art Is Political: Käthe Kollwitz and Sue Coe"
This crackling show, titled after a quote from Toni Morrison, displays prints and drawings by Kollwitz, a German social realist who died in 1945, and Coe, an English antiwar, anti-capitalist, and pro-animal-rights illustrator who lives in upstate New York. From opposite ends of the twentieth century, they prove the capacity of art, when both impassioned and adept, to dramatize worldly injustice with fury and flair. Kollwitz is the more appealing, with a style of masterly touch and tender pathos, notably in delicately shaded images of mothers and children indomitably bonded in poverty or facing unspecified threats. Coe makes a burnt offering of her own fine artistic gifts by cultivating an ugliness to befit the targets of her rage, including military and sexual violence and, especially, the horrors of industrial slaughterhouses, which, starting in the late nineteen-eighties, she spent several years researching in person. Both artists have assigned themselves an evergreen social mission: to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. *Through Feb. 10. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. 212-245-6734.)*

"London Painters"
The American-born painter R. B. Kitaj coined the term "School of London," in the nineteen-seventies, to describe a socially and professionally linked group of artists, most of them English, who were devoted to the then unfashionable practice of figurative painting. Works by seven of those artists, made between 1944 and 2014, are on view here, including a wiry ink-on-paper self-portrait by Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon's still shocking canvas "Study after Velázquez," from 1950, in which the ghostly outline of Pope Innocent X is seen screaming, awash in blood-red stripes. Staking out turf that edges even deeper into quasi-abstraction are Leon Kossoff's brownish cityscape "Stormy Summer Day, Dalston Lane," whose thickly painted surface is a maze of wrinkled ridges, and Frank Auerbach's "Head of J.Y.M. II," an intimate, largely black-and-white portrait that induces a rolling vertigo reminiscent of the best work of Chaim Soutine. Striking a more joyful note is David Hockney's bright back-yard scene "Montcalm Pool, Los Angeles." *Through Jan. 18. (Ordovas, 9 E. 77th St. 212-756-8870.)*

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Lee Krasner
Working in her late husband Jackson Pollock's East Hampton studio, often at night, in the years following his accidental death, in 1956, Krasner produced twenty-four paintings in a series she titled "Umber," five of which are on view in this small but powerful show. They're rough and explosive abstractions in which thick strokes of black, brown, and off-white jostle against the edges of the canvas and one another. While the works clearly suggest an artist trying to externalize grief, there's a joyful aspect to them, too. In the center of a brown storm of brushstrokes spattered with creamy blotches, titled "Fecundity," several curving black lines evoke the expansive feeling of gracefully opening arms. *Through Jan. 13. (Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave., at 27th St. 212-563-4474.)*

"The Estate of General Idea"
General Idea was founded in Toronto, in 1969, by the artists AA Bronson, Felix Partz, and Jorge Zontal. The group is best known for its work addressing the AIDS crisis (Partz and Zontal both died from the disease in 1994), which made novel use of pop-culture forms, such as replacing the "LOVE" in Robert Indiana's famous red, green, and blue sculpture with the word "AIDS." This show introduces viewers to the group's less well-known paintings: hard-edged, fluorescent, geometric abstractions that evoke the pixelated silhouettes of eight-bit video games. They also allude to the mystical and political significance of stepped architecture in ancient societies, from Mesopotamia to the Mayans, where such structures were thought to lead to the gods. Exhibited alongside the paintings are plans for the "The 1984 Miss General Idea Pavilion," an absurdist beauty-pageant venue that, per the artists' lore, had burned to the ground, leaving only the footprint of a ziggurat. *Through Jan. 13. (Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 534 W. 26th St. 212-744-7400.)*

"Insiders: Henry Ray Clark and Frank Jones"
Forget the obsolete term "outsider artist." This show makes a compelling case for two self-taught artists as "insiders," based on their representations of fantastical interior realms—and because they were both incarcerated at Huntsville State Prison, in Texas. Clark, who was imprisoned in 1977, used markers on manila envelopes to depict a pantheon of characters, announced in the works' titles—"I Am Vaavka," "I Am Time"—with stylized faces at the center of each composition, surrounded by ornate, geometric borders. Jones, who served three prison terms between 1941 and 1964, favored skeletal structures against blank backgrounds. "Melentile House—High Class People" is characteristic of his style, in which each line is heavily embellished in red and blue pencil. The festive appearance of Jones's works belie their significance to the artist, who believed that the act of drawing could trap the spirits that haunted him. *Through Jan. 13. (Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 212-627-4819.)*

"The Shadow Archive: An Investigation Into Vernacular Portrait Photography"
The first in a multiyear series of shows about photographs made for commercial or practical purposes, curated by Brian Wallis, considers the portrait. Most of the images date to the nineteenth century; all of them fit into typologies. Fifteen tintypes of "workers with tools of their trade" include a barber, a piano tuner, and a sword swallower; several mug shots attributed to the California sheriff Thomas Cunningham are so picturesque that they could be mistaken for stills from a Hollywood period piece. Passport photographers across Africa take full-length portraits and cut out the heads, leaving behind accidental studies of fashion. A mesmerizing series of such discards, shown here, were taken against a red background in Gulu, Uganda, and collected by the Italian-born journalist Martina Bacigalupo. A found group of forty-eight color snapshots of migrant farmworkers, each holding up a paper number—their source is unknown—takes the idea of identifying documents in a more chilling direction. *Through March 31. (Walther Collection, 526 W. 26th St. 212-352-0683.)*