

Top Ten Art Shows of 2016



Abigail DeVille's "Only When It's Dark Enough Can You See The Stars" (Courtesy/The Contemporary)

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1 ● Abigail DeVille, "Only When It's Dark Enough Can You See the Stars" via The Contemporary at the Peale Museum

There is always more to say about this work, an installation by Abigail DeVille in the former Peale Museum, commissioned by The Contemporary, which is why it's our number one art show of 2016. The more you try to describe it through its objects and materials—festooned mannequins, taxidermied animals, ancient photographs, the darkened corridor with an epileptic flashing white light, the dry cleaning rack which clanked around its track on which found objects hang hauntingly—the more it unfolds in inquiry. Both an educational tour and a gripping emotional excursion, "Only When It's Dark" told snippets of Black history and resistance and presence in Baltimore—and of the many shapes this museum took over the years. But the installation felt very much alive and ongoing, a site of future potential, with weekly salons held in the "The People's Theater" featuring local performers and poets, such as Meccamorphosis, Tariq Touré, Kondwani Fidel, and Joyce Scott. (Rebekah Kirkman)