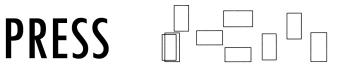
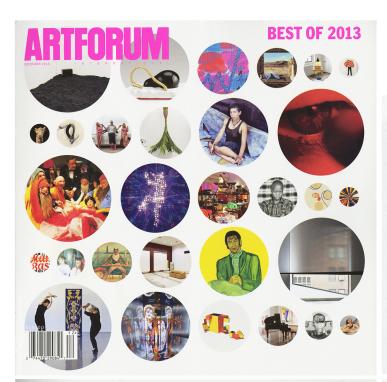
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ARTFORUM



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6. Jason Rhoades, The Creation Myth, 1998, mixed media. Installation view, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, 2013. Photo: Aaron Igler.

JASON RHOADES (INSTITUTE OF CONTEM-PORARY ART, PHILADELPHIA; CURATED BY INGRID SCHAFFNER) Combing the layered arcana at the base of the cafeteria-table Babel that is Rhoades's Creation Myth. 1998, I was startled when a foot-wide smoke ring grazed my head and, a few yards on, vanished into thin air. A fitting metaphor for Rhoades's art and (too-short) life, the ephemeral emanation underscored the inherent challenge of retrospecting an artist whose living sculpture means nothing sans the carnival that gives it breath. For this reason, the occasion is inevitably a bittersweet one, which is all the more reason to celebrate the ICA and Schaffner, who, with modest space but maximum sensitivity, attempted the impossible—and kept the flame alive.