

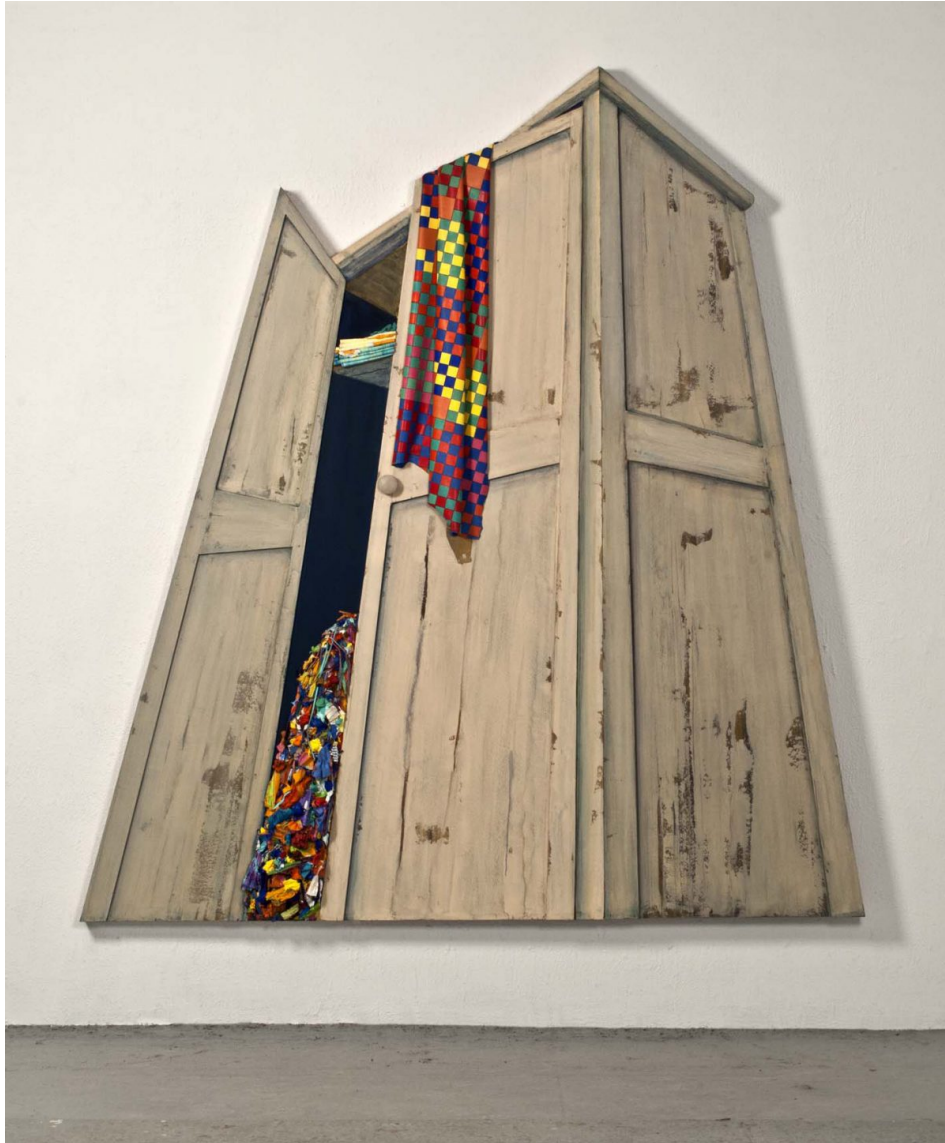
# TWO COATS OF PAINT

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March 8, 2019

## *Leslie Wayne: Burning down the house*

8:53 am by Editorial Assistant



*Leslie Wayne, Instructions for Dancing, 2018, oil and acrylic on panel, 77.5 x 71.5 x 6 inches*

Contributed by Sharon Butler / Now in her mid-60s, [Leslie Wayne](#) has had several impressive shows at Jack Shainman, but the work in her current exhibition, on view through March 30, exceeds its predecessors in conceptual confidence, mastery of materials, and even an impressive swelling of imagination. She has scaled up the size of her work and kicked the process into a higher gear. Using beautifully crafted, shaped wooden panels, Wayne renders armoires, a studio bookcase, a tool chest, a ladder in towering, larger-than-life objects that combine carpentry with wonky linear perspective. Gone is the familiar reliance on a single repetitive format (paint rags, windows) and the paradoxical process of making paintings both of and out of paint. Through contextual expansion — from creating the illusion of fabric, to creating pieces of furniture where fabrics and other items are stored — Wayne's work has gained conceptual heft and substance without sacrificing her signature wit and love of a good pun.



Leslie Wayne, *Everything*, 2019, oil, metal and rope on wood, 81 x 45.25 x 5.5 inches

As always, Wayne is a master paint wrangler, and she has achieved an astonishing level of craftsmanship in her new work. In *What's Inside*, a pile of thick gooey paint is revealed behind a partially opened shed door, yet the paint never sinks into murky sludgy color. The clear, bright out-of-the-tube freshness may reference the light from Wayne's childhood spent in sunny California, and it certainly conveys a sense of optimism that is key in all of her work.

In *Everything*, a rope appears to keep a pair of closet doors from spilling open under the weight of an avalanche of paint. It's an illusion, of course, crafted with shaped panels, door handles, a rope, and paint. This facile transition between fact and fiction has always been a hallmark of Wayne's work, and here, perhaps in response to the new landscape of "alternative facts" and disinformation, it is fully and effectively engaged. Several, like *Toolchest* and *Burning Down the House*, have cropped lower edges so that the pictorial illusion is truncated, allowing truth to fully be revealed.



*Leslie Wayne, What's Inside, 2018, oil on wood, 84.25 x 41 x 3.75 inches*





*Leslie Wayne, Tool Chest, 2018, oil and acrylic on wood, 86 x 42 x 5 inches*



Leslie Wayne, *A Life*, 2018, oil on canvas

Each painting is hung less than a foot off the ground, and at 85-inches tall (and more), they tower above the viewer like the monolith in Stanley Kubrich's 1968 sci-fi film, *2001 A Space Odyssey*. But the images constructed in the panels are always a bit off-kilter and the perspective isn't quite right. In *A Life*, Wayne presents a set of metal bookshelves, jammed with art books, CDs, an old boom box, and boxes of paint. The perspective is skewed to create the illusion that the shelves are much taller than they would actually be in real life, as if seen from a child's perspective. Similarly, in *Instructions for Dancing*, an oversized armoire, outfitted with paint-objects fashioned to look like textiles and a pile of paint on the floor, has some serious torque on the right hand side that would cause an actual object to buckle and fold.



*Leslie Wayne, Burning Down the House, 2018, oil on wood, 85.5 x 40 x 5.5 inches*





Leslie Wayne, *Burning Down the House*, 2018, oil on wood, 85.5 x 40 x 5.5 inches (Detail)

The show is titled “What’s Inside,” and the work is indeed about a threshold into an interior world. At the same time, they are very much about the things we amass over time. For an artist, that means ideas and, of course, for painters, objects. These remarkable pieces are full of art historical references—[Richter](#), [Artschwagger](#), [Tuttle](#), [Murray](#), [Poons](#), and more—but they are also a rejection of the ephemeral, the small-scale, and the unimportant. It’s as if Wayne, who has worked at a small-scale for much of her career, has come to the realization that physicality and size are not inconsequential. In this series, Wayne seems to be exploring new ideas about accumulation and permanence. They might be meditations about the things an artist leaves behind.

“[Leslie Wayne: What’s Inside](#),” Jack Shainman, Chelsea, New York, NY. Through March 30, 2019.

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