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by Stephanie Eckardt

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Evan Holloway, *Two Ferns*, 2017.

Last week, the L.A.-based artist Evan Holloway opened his first-ever exhibition with Paula Cooper Gallery, marking a rare New York showing for a sculptor who's always kept to a West Coast milieu. "I don't know that anybody much turned out just for me," said Holloway, who enjoyed himself at the opening nonetheless—along with the guests who spilled over from the one across the street. "I don't think I'm very well known here."

Holloway was definitely being modest. Among those in the crowd was Raf Simons, who described Holloway as a "very good friend" to me last week, while adding that he's followed the artist's output since the beginning. (Holloway's sculpture "001 Seconds" was the first piece of art Simons ever purchased, the beginning of a now-massive art collection that's steadily grown over the last 20 years.)

Simons, then, would know perhaps better than anyone that Holloway's showing last week was something of an anomaly. To start, it was in New York—a city Holloway hasn't had a solo show in since 2010, opting to keep things mostly in California at his L.A. gallery David Kordansky, or with Xavier Hufkens, his Brussels gallerist in Simons's native Belgium, where the pair first met.

Born in La Miranda, California in 1967, Holloway went to school in Santa Cruz before getting his MFA in sculpture in the late '90s at UCLA. There, he studied with the enigmatic sculptor Charles Ray and started building upon the practice of influential sculptors of the late '60s: Bruce Nauman, Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Eva Hesse, and other artists who "abolished, got rid of, and just did not use pedestals," opting instead to place their work directly on the floor so that there was nothing between the art and the viewer.

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Evan Holloway, *Hollywood Squares*, 2017.

As the works up at Paula Cooper reveal, though, Holloway's started to turn his back on that of late—if only because his new creations, unlike his lighter designs that often take the form of spindly tree branches, have started to clock in at around 200 or 300 pounds.

"I broke the weight barrier, which was a huge psychological barrier, in 2014," Holloway said. The breakthrough, though, no longer lent works like sculptures of plants in lab-like settings, or trees studded with dozens of batteries, to simply being carted around his expansive Glendale studio. So, next came hidden spring-loaded flap doors that allowed him to move around his hulking bronze creations with a pallet jack. And once it came time to consider their display, Holloway had to think the previously unthinkable: pedestals and plinths.

"Once a work gets up over 200 pounds, it's important to figure out how it's going to move," Holloway said. "I try to be very pragmatic about what I'm doing."

That easygoing practicality—not to mention appreciation for plant life—are both testaments to just how Californian Holloway is, even if it's something that only strikes the artist when he leaves the city. "I've only lived on the west coast," Holloway said. "I think my set of concerns are just inherently more west coast. Plus, I'm a real proponent of seeing things in person and the experiences you have with objects, so west coast sculptures, like Peter Shelton's, have been the biggest influence on me."

Over the last decade, Simons has been known to make the trek to California, too, whether piling into Holloway's beat-up 1985 Toyota minivan and "sputtering" their way to the Pasadena flea market or simply exploring the artist's L.A. studio—often with a stop for snacks.

"Raf came and visited my studio two years ago, and on the way there are these very homemade hot dog vendors on street corners, so he had a hot dog on the corner of Second and Beverly," Holloway recalled with a laugh. "He was so excited about it. He was like, 'This is the best hot dog I've ever had.'"