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The Year in Art Criticism: 5 Exhilarating Pieces You Need to Read Before 2026

As the Critics' Table and the gallery world breaks for the holiday, we look back on a selection of notable pieces published from 2025.



A post from Maxwell Graham Gallery documents the removal of *Replacement*, 2025, by Cameron Rowland from the exterior of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (via Instagram screenshot).

Johanna Fateman on Cameron Rowland at Dia Beacon

In October, in Paris, a wall text for the exhibition “ECHO DELAY REVERB,” was updated with the note: “Palais de Tokyo has determined that Cameron Rowland’s artwork *Replacement* could be considered illegal.” The American artist’s conceptual work instructed that the French flag on the facade of the building be replaced with the flag of Martinique, which was colonized by the French in 1635. An Instagram post from Rowland’s New York gallery, Maxwell Graham, documented the flag’s absence, after a previous post with a nearly identical snapshot had documented the Martinique flag’s prior installation.

This Parisian affair is as good an example as any for what was a politically tumultuous year marked by exceptional moments in art. Fittingly, the Critics’ Table began the year with Johanna Fateman’s review of Cameron Rowland’s “Properties,” curated by Jordan Carter and Matilde Guidelli-Guidi, at Dia Beacon. In retrospect, Fateman’s piece provided an essential primer in advance of one the year’s most notable controversies.