

## VISUAL ARTS

In Studio with Micah Lexier:  
Finder, Keeper

The Toronto artist's unfailingly generous practice gathers up a host of fascinations, both at home and in a new show at Birch Contemporary

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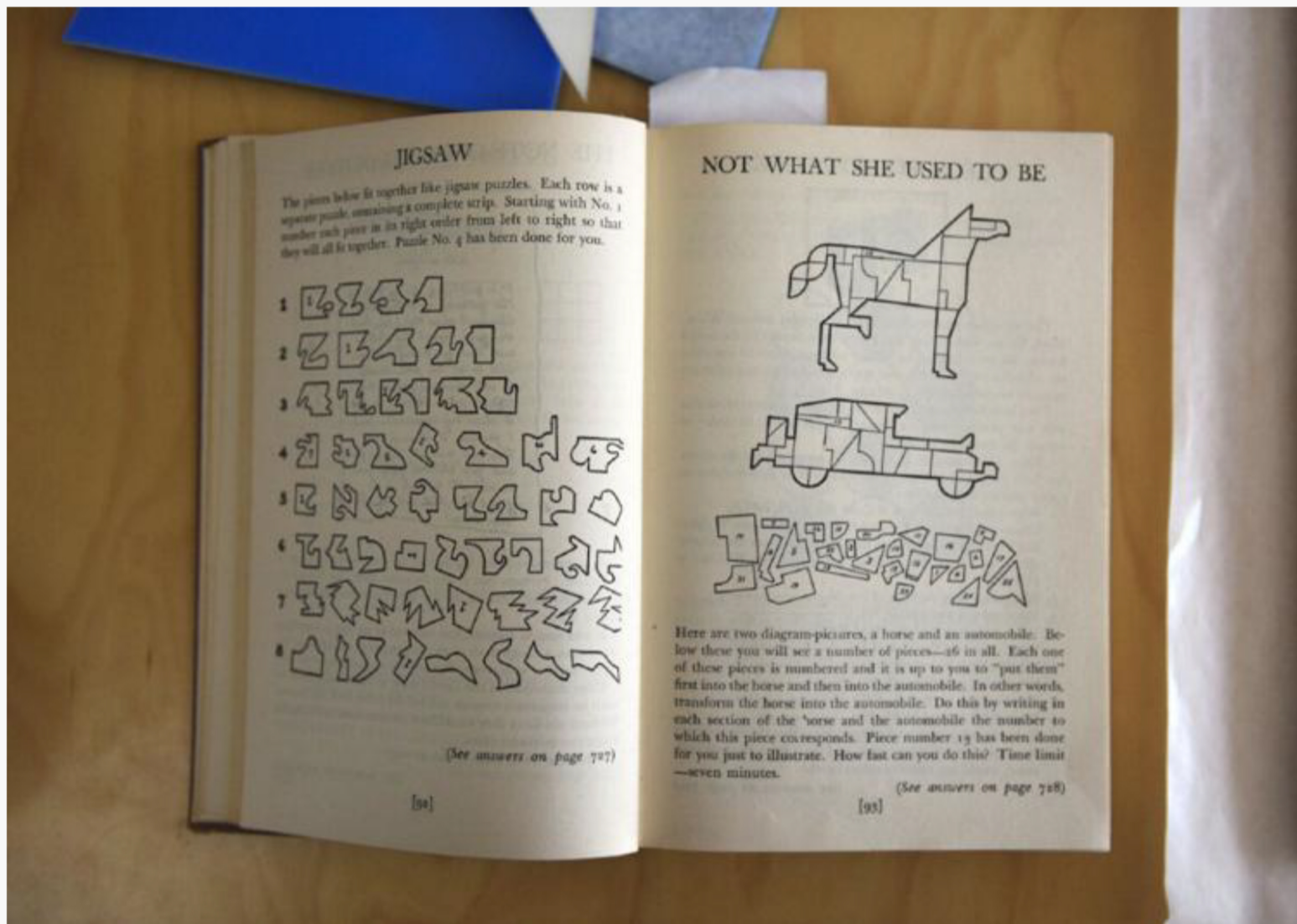


Micah Lexier in his Queen Street West studio. His new show, *Versions*, opens Oct. 29 and runs to Dec. 5 at Birch Contemporary.

Murray Whyte / Toronto Star

By Murray Whyte Visual Arts Critic

**Micah Lexier** is equal parts forager, curator, artist and formal enthusiast, and the sum of those parts always adds up to a greater whole. His fascinations are on permanent display at his Queen West studio and home, which all by itself is one of the best art museums in the city, but you can get the full dose of his thoughtful, playful oeuvre at *Versions*, which [opens this week at Birch Contemporary](#).



A forager of unique and vintage books, Lexier found this old puzzle book at a second-hand sale recently, and its playful recombination of forms to different ends provided the inspiration for 'Versions.'

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A neatly-stacked collection of wooden cut-out forms Lexier made for 'Versions,' which evoke an old-fashioned puzzle but are really more a comment on how form and imagination can embody limitless possibility.

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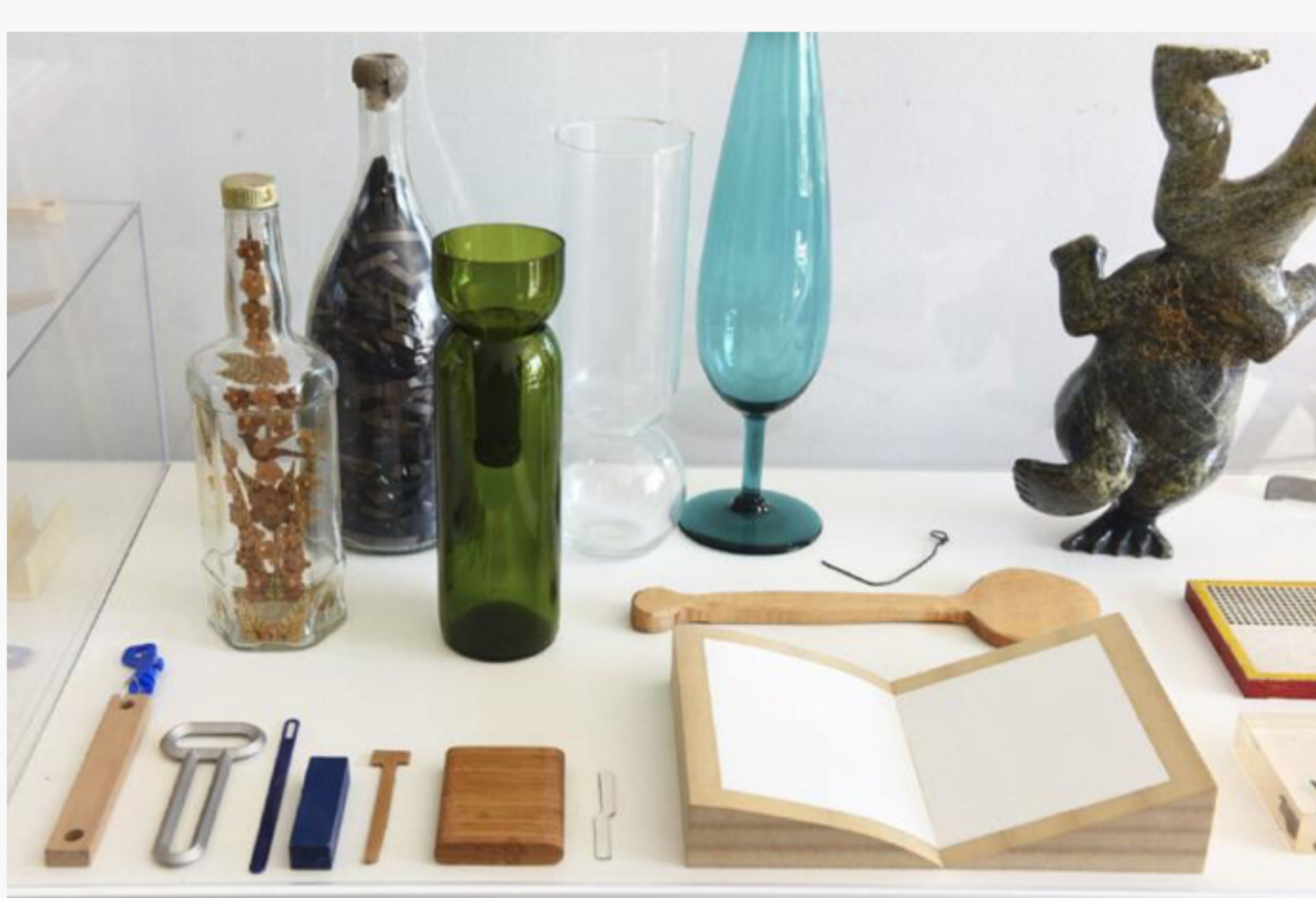
A book Lexier picked up at the old book sale at the University of Toronto this fall. A tireless forager, the book, with its plain brown wrapper with a mysterious hole cut out on the spine, appealed to the artist's sense of formal play.

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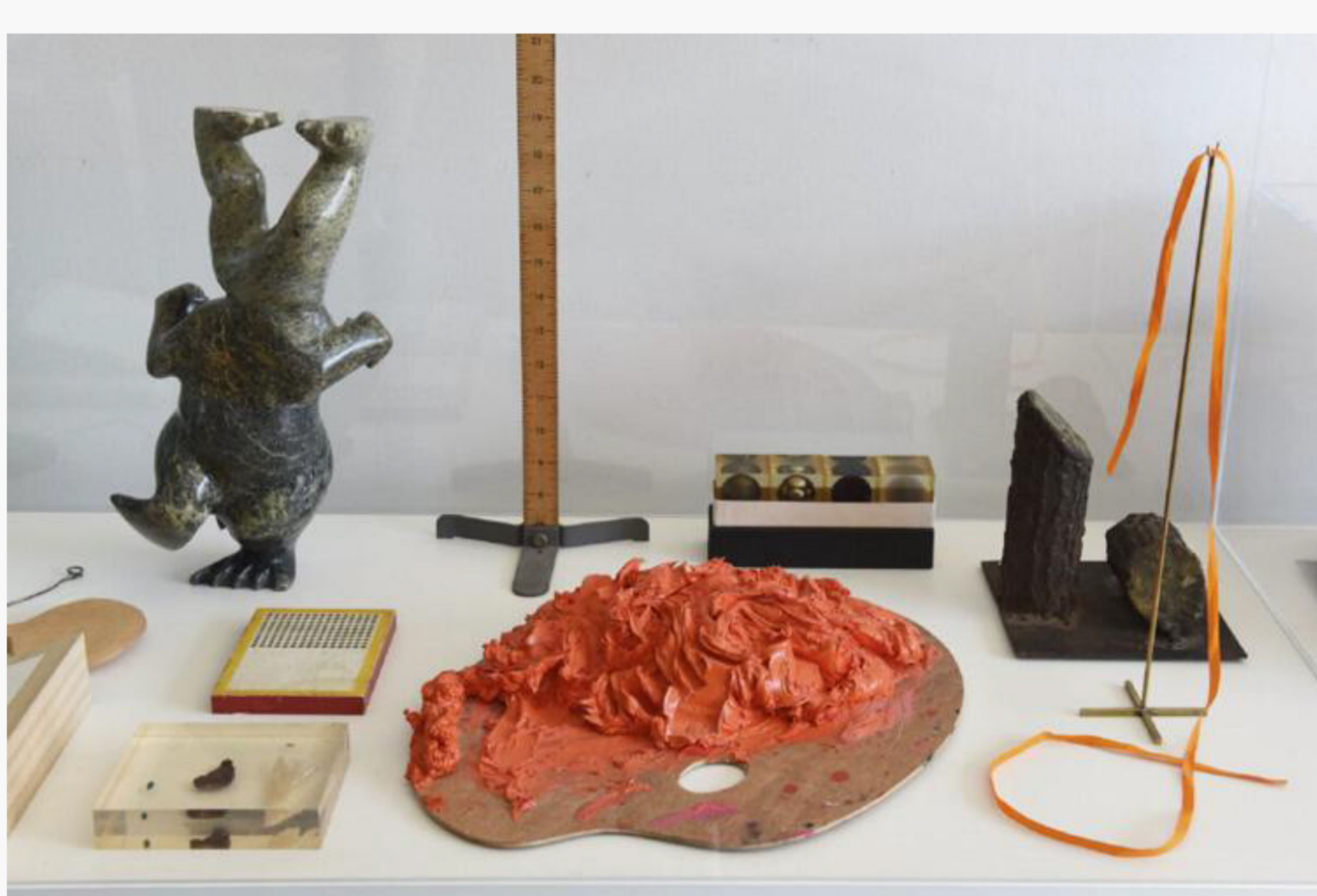
Lexier's art collection is thorough and unique, comprising everything from polished works to rough bits and pieces of process. Clockwise from top centre: A sculpture by Mark Gomes, a collaborative work between Greg Curnoe and Pierre Theberge, install instructions hand-drawn by Dan Flavin, a black and white work by Kay Rosen, a small painting by Eli Langer, a fabric piece by Janice Kerbel and a photo work by Marianne Casasanta.

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Lexier, a master scavenger, displays artworks and found objects side by side, blurring the line between art and the everyday. Clockwise from top right: A wooden structure in a bottle, found on the street, a spool of audio tape from the Christian Marclay's work *Tape Fall*, a bottle repurposed as a funnel, a pair of vases, a twist of wire, a reconfigured Inuit sculpture by Stan Denniston, a rustic wooden spoon, a wooden book sculpture by Roula Partheniou, and (l to r) a piece by Vannessa Maltese, a bottle opener, an airline stir stick, a toy block, a cardboard fragment, a piece by Frieso Boning, and another cardboard fragment.

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Lexier collects found objects and art with equal gusto, displaying them side by side. Here, clockwise from top right: The Denniston sculpture, made of two fused fragments of broken Inuit sculpture, a vertical ruler, a vintage set of Enzo Mari spheres, in resin cubes, a brass sculpture by a Montreuil junk shop, a piece by Didier Courbot, a palette given him by Kim Dorland, three types of fungi preserved in resin and a vintage punch card game.

Murray Whyte



Murray Whyte is the Star's former art critic.