



ALEX KWARTLER

Alex Kwartler's paintings subtly dismantle the ordinary symbols and signs that permeate our everyday lives; collapsing the transcendental and everyday onto the painted surface. A varied lexicon of codified signs and signifiers such as pennies, Powerball, Tums, tin cans, and telephone receivers dot Kwartler's paintings. These quotidian and anachronistic items of pure utility become iconographic against Kwartler's ground of heavily processed expressionist gestures. Thoughtful and incisive, he deconstructs painterly space and visual meaning with sharp wit and humor.

Alex Kwartler received his MFA from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ and his BFA from The Cooper Union, New York, NY. Kwartler has mounted three solo exhibitions at Magenta Plains. He has exhibited his work at The Green Gallery, Milwaukee, WI; 47 Canal, New York, NY; Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ; Ceysson & Bénétière, New York, NY; Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York, NY; MoMA PS 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, NY; Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ; White Columns, New York, NY; Bortolami Gallery, New York, NY; Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, NY; Martos Gallery, New York, NY; Casey Kaplan, New York, NY; Petzel Gallery, New York, NY; and Wallspace, New York, NY. His exhibitions have been reviewed in The New York Times, The New Yorker, Frieze, Artforum and Art in America. Kwartler's paintings were featured in "Painting Abstraction" edited by Bob Nickas and published by Phaidon Press. Kwartler was artist-in-residence at The Chinati Foundation in Marfa, TX in Spring 2017.

Born in 1979, New York, NY

Lives and works in New York, NY

Arte Fuse

May 2019

ARTE FUSE

ART FAIRS, CONCEPTUAL ART, DRAWING, INSTALLATION, REVIEWS, REVIEWS AND PHOTO STORIES, SCULPTURE

Highlights from Frieze New York, 2019

05/08/2019 by **PATTI JORDAN**

Frieze New York once again enticed viewers on Randall's Island this year with the global, cultural cognoscenti circulating its booths and aisles last week en masse. Interspersed throughout its north and south entrances the fair boasted exceptional works representing a broad sampling of artists ranging from those well situated in the contemporary canon to lesser-known established and newly emerging artists. New curated slots also brought attention to established Lantinx and Latin American artists as well as those fresh on the scene.

In light of the fact that Frieze 2019 granted plenty of exceptional standouts amongst the proliferation of captivating curations, below are those I found to be some of the top takeaways from this year's crop:



Alex Kwartler, *Untitled (dusk)*, 2019, 72 x 48 in.

At Magenta Plains Gallery's booth, two large-scale paintings by the newly represented artist Alex Kwartler were literal and figural eye-catchers. Kwartler's brushwork evinced an intrinsic technical facility and pictorial prowess through astute swoops and swashes of subtle but luminous warm and cool color gradation of shifting opacities. The artist additionally interjected dually frontal and recessive black and white dots (or possibly punctuations?) to add further play with space to trick the eye. To loosely coin the terms "slacker" or "casual abstraction" would not qualify as an insult as this gestural pair demonstrated ample use of Kwartler's overt preference for flatness, process-based painting. Powdered pigment appears to be vertically poured over his surfaces as an after-effect in order to heighten their atmospheric qualities as well as the illusion of depth of field, whilst the low-lying, closely cropped curvatures substantiate the space.

In only its second year of operation, Magenta Plains is a multigenerational gallery located in the Lower East Side and is committed to supporting a roster of emergent art and emerging artists. Kwartler has since had two solo exhibitions at Magenta Plains: "Pain Quotidien," 2016 and "Snowflake," 2018.

Two Coats of Paint

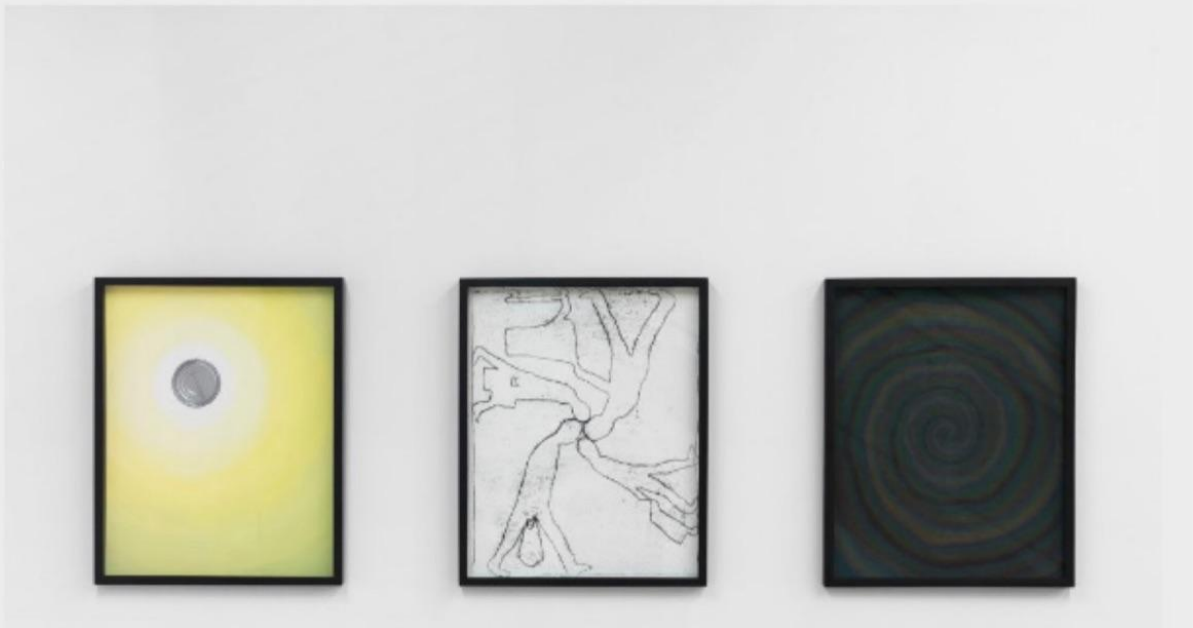
June 2018

TWO COATS OF PAINT

June 22, 2018

Alex Kwartler: Tenuous survivalism

6:51 pm by Two Coats Staff



Contributed by Sharon Butler / In "Snowflake," Alex Kwartler's recent show at Magenta Plains, small-scale paintings captured the desultory emotional tenor of 2017. Compared with his [earlier exhibitions](#), which featured a lively, large-scale abstractions alongside smaller black pictograph-like images and explored notions about surface and spontaneity, the work on view this year appears slow, dark, and extremely deliberate.

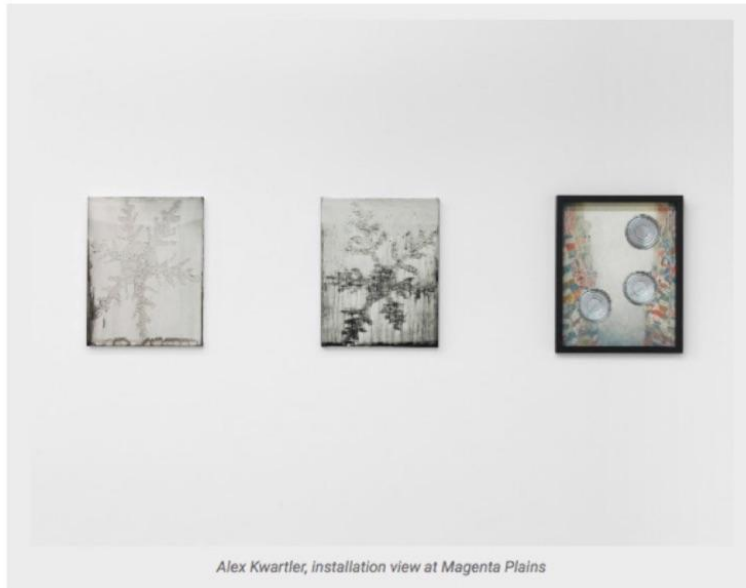


Alex Kwartler, *Snowflake (To the Harbormaster, for ML)*, 2018, oil and pumice on canvas, 14 x 11 inches

The title of the show references an epithet, originally hurled at coddled millennials, that Trump trolls adopted to level at anyone deemed too sensitive—primarily liberals—during the 2016 presidential campaign. Many of the paintings in the show feature kaleidoscope-like shapes, formed from combining outline images of people carrying bags and rolling suitcases (“schleppers”). Dark gray outlines against cool white fields, both with matte surfaces, absorb light rather than giving anything back. The schleppers seem imprinted on the surface rather than brushed, and together the figures form crude snowflake-like forms with empty star or badge shapes in the center of the canvases.



Alex Kwartler, *Alex Kwartler, Penny III*, 2018, oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches

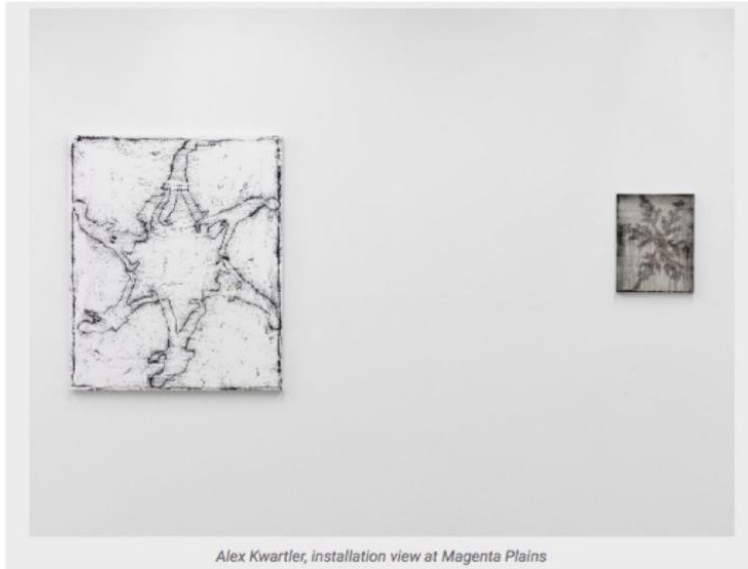


Alex Kwartler, *Installation view at Magenta Plains*

Kwartler has adopted a range of different approaches for the current work. Several pieces are made on canvasboard and displayed behind glass in black wooden frames, a strategy more commonly used for photographs than painting. By arraying the paintings in this way, Kwartler creates distance from the artist's touch and imparts a sense that they are valued relics from the past. Two of the paintings, *Celebration! (After Childe Hassam)* and *Apotheosis (with tuna)*, have metallic disks from the tops of tuna cans embedded in them, with the 2020 sell-by date clearly stamped on their surfaces. In another untitled painting, a dense dark swirl, like a somber version of the background from a sixties psychedelic poster or the *Time Tunnel* vortex, is joined by a forlorn piece of popcorn, resting inside the glass at the bottom of the frame.



Alex Kwartler, *Installation view at Magenta Plains*



Alex Kwartler, installation view at Magenta Plains



Alex Kwartler



Two more traditional paintings, *Penny II* and *Penny III*, feature white-on-white and grey-on-grey images of Lincoln pennies, dated 2016, that seem to be falling in the air as if during a coin toss. The close-neutral palettes are reminiscent of Luc Tuymans' early still life and figure paintings. Several paintings, black-and-white like the images of the schleppers, present traditional (but melting) snowflake images crafted with a gritty combination of dark grey oil paint and pumice, evoking snow not at the beginning of the storm when it creates a magical landscape, but rather several weeks in, after the bright white becomes speckled with ash and soot.

In their deft and knowing dreariness, Kwartler's new paintings challenge viewers to confront ugly, sad reality. They are poems about the delicate object that has survived, but just barely.

["Alex Kwartler: Snowflake,"](#) Magenta Plains, LES, New York, NY. Through June 17, 2018.



BILL SAYLOR

Bill Saylor emerged from the vibrant painting scene that developed in the 1990s in Brooklyn. Incredibly influential to a younger generation of painters, Saylor's work is distinguished by his merging of explosive gestural abstraction with a comprehensive personal iconography, revealing an anthropogenic concern and interest in natural history, weather patterns, and marine biology. Saylor's work recycles and reframes elements from graffiti, cave painting, and industrial production while mining the legacy of both American and European expressionism.

Bill Saylor has held solo exhibitions at Magenta Plains, New York; Galerie Julien Cadet, Paris; Leo Koenig Inc., New York; The Journal Gallery, Brooklyn; and Loyal Gallery, Stockholm. Two-person shows include Air Like Wine with Rob Mcleish at Neon Parc, Brunswick, AU; Bill Saylor & Josh Smith at Hiromi Yoshii Gallery, Tokyo, JP; Bill Saylor & Aidas Bareikis at Shoot The Lobster, New York, NY; Bill Saylor & Donald Baechler at Makebish, New York, NY; and Mason Saltarrelli and Bill Saylor at Shrine, New York, NY. Saylor was included in Animal Farm at the Brant Foundation and has participated in group exhibitions at Venus Over Manhattan, New York; CANADA, New York; Martos Gallery, Los Angeles; MIER Gallery, Los Angeles; Ceysson & Bénétière, Luxembourg and Yerba Buena Art Center, San Francisco. Saylor's work was also included in Contemporary Painting curated by Alex Katz at the Colby College Museum of Art in 2004. In 2010, Saylor collaborated on the zine "Ho Bags" with Harmony Korine and he was an artist-in-residence at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, TX.

Born in 1960, Willow Grove, PA
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY

The New York Times

May 6, 2021

The New York Times

ART REVIEW

On Governors Island, Art Interventions Are Everywhere

NADA House hosts 66 galleries, nonprofits and artist-run spaces arrayed in and around stately officers' residences. Expect the refreshingly unfamiliar.

By **Roberta Smith**

Published May 6, 2021 Updated May 11, 2021

If you want respite from the moneyed, big-name glamour of some of your larger art fairs, you can, in one little trip, leave it all behind; see some relatively untrammelled parts of New York and also revisit the way that many things in the art world begin — that is, in a D.I.Y., grass-roots situation, when people take things into their own hands. If you want V.I.P. services at this event, you'll have to bring your own; snacks and fluids are recommended and of course sensible shoes. The V.I.P. lounge is a huge greensward graced by tall, regal trees.

I refer to “NADA House 2021,” which opens Saturday on Governors Island in New York Harbor and runs through Aug. 1. It is not an art fair, technically, but it remains a lively, confab of art, artists, dealers and such organized by the New Art Dealers Alliance or NADA. To get there requires a short ferry ride from Lower Manhattan or Brooklyn. (The Brooklyn ferry runs only on weekends right now.) An eight-minute walk — past Castle Williams, a circular red sandstone fortification from the early 19th century — brings you to Colonels Row, a string of stately brick officers' residences. “NADA House 21” occupies five of them side by side, from 403 to 405 Colonels Row.

Before you reach the houses, you may come across “Luna,” by [Bill Saylor](#) (of Magenta Plains gallery), an engaging outdoor sculpture that cleverly accommodates his improvisational painting style with a panoply of graffiti-like phantasms on five thick, white panels that converge like an eccentric kiosk.

Whitehot Magazine

June 2020

**East Hampton NY: Mason Saltarrelli and Bill Saylor at Duck Creek Arts Center***Installation view, Duck Creek Arts Center, 2020***Le Deuce Deuce: Mason Saltarrelli and Bill Saylor**

Duck Creek Arts Center

Open to the Public Friday, Saturday & Sunday, 12- 4pm

By CHASE SZAKMARY, June 2020

Beyond the glitz of Main Street, Newtown Lane, and the perfume weighted air with news of monolithic Manhattan galleries eastward expansions—winding over old Indian footpaths, paved roads, through wooded reef, is the turn off for Squaw Road, site of The Arts Center at Duck Creek’s recent exhibition of works by Brooklyn based artists’ Mason Saltarrelli and Bill Saylor.

The show entitled, “Le Deuce Deuce” is as much a sequel to their preceding exhibition at Shrine (of the same name minus a Deuce), as it is, an algorithmic word play of a tawdry homonym or a Vulcan reminder of life’s multiplicity—*we come in peace*—not without permutations.

The shows namesake rolls on the same side of separate dye; two mid-career artists that took similar journeys through the core of NY's neo-expressionist universe, both performing as assistants to art elite, Julian Schnabel, at his Seven Sister's studio, but at different times. They would later encounter one another through a process not unlike osmosis. On Instagram, a mutual appreciation for one another's work stoked a karmic bond. It seems almost fated now that they are here together, in the mythical land of Pollock-Krasner, not far from their old Seven Sister's haunt.



Installation view, Duck Creek Arts Center, 2020

Upon arriving at Duck Creek, two things are apparent: the rhythmic drumming of car tires upon the bumpy road like ritual, and three structures that emerge from a clearing in the wood like Puritan mountaintops. It is relevant that their work would be shown here. In a space, buoyed by the boundlessness of nature and time. It allows if just for a moment meditation of our tiny thought littered minds on something greater, that might then reward us upon our departure with a renewed vigor, to do better toward one another because after all we are our brother's keeper.

So it is, Saylor and Saltarrelli or Saltarrelli and Saylor (sounding like a hip Manhattan ad firm) present a universe, in eight works total, two paintings and two sculptures from the former, and four paintings from the latter.

Saltarrelli's color palette is muted and does not visually overlap with the vibrant flashe, oil, and spray on Bill's canvases. But I wonder, if a certain level of synchronization were desired, in addition to the subdued white and blues, might a touch a yellow (like in Bill's *Triad* piece or the ochre in *Lucky Charms*) have taken the exhibition further along. But this is not my primary grievance just a thought that came to mind while viewing Saltarrelli's work. My chief complaint is that such a thought came to mind at all. The work is smart, so I would have liked more of it in a room all its own, given opportunity to build on its quiet complexities. However, short attentions drift towards the gargantuan creatures in the room.

I'm drawn into swashbuckling conversations with the likes of Charles Darwin and Thomas Pynchon; they're conversing over the subconscious mind of *Faulkner*, *Gremlins*, and *Kush*—all portals for me into the realm of artist Bill Saylor.



Installation view, Duck Creek Arts Center, 2020

Bill has been a mainstay in the Brooklyn art-scene since the late 90's. His irreverent style, expressionistic like Penck and genuine like Traylor, merges marine biology and 80's pop culture. A style that has outlasted "rebellious" fades touted about town like seasonal handbags. Saylor stakes his claim over an occultic look that better encapsulates the rebellious American artist than what some Chelsea project space might manufacture. One need only to look upon his jerry-rigged studio, assembled outdoors with tarpaulin, wood, and other colloquial things.

A few such items have entered the show, in the form of his assemblage, *Accumulator*, made from: pine tree trunk, cedar board, metal, mylar, and PVC pipe. This departure from his paintings has the feel of folk art found in an eccentric's defunct barrier beach house. It attempts to do as it says on the tin, *accumulate*, like the tiny wood totem mounted to its satellite dish with cosmic comic book powers. However, it feels to me a bit extraneous.

There's a different sort of sensibility. It's stripping the paint. The totem mounted to the piece has a godlike aura but it's throwing off the power dynamic in the room. Like Matisse's studio show, the work is a chance to draw back the curtain on Saylor's studio process but in this instance, it seems out of place.

The show plays to the multitudes of our shared experiences for all things living, and showcases two talented painters, playing a similar song just so differently. Had I a wish upon those stars it would have been to incorporate more the dialectic of the land and infrastructure available. If possible, sew the expanse so that Saltarrelli's language be read clearly, with proper inflection, and Saylor's work returned to its natural habitat, in the sway of the tree's, oriented by the triad constellation of barn buildings—a satellite nation of painterly delight. **WM**

DON DUDLEY



Born in Los Angeles, California in 1930, Don Dudley is a crucial, historical link between the optical and surface oriented “Cool School” or “Finish Fetish” generation of California artists who came into prominence in the 1960s and the more cerebral, Hard-edged Minimalist artists such as Frank Stella, Brice Marden and Ellsworth Kelly. Dudley’s practice embraces drawing and painting by way of sculpture and installation—creating subtle and sophisticated wall works that stand out for both their elegance and formal intelligence. Throughout Don Dudley’s seventy-year career he has challenged artistic conventions and the traditional concept of painting by incorporating industrial materials in his work such as aluminum, lacquer, homasote and plywood.

Dudley lived and worked on the West Coast for thirty-eight years before relocating to New York City in 1969. Settling first into a loft on Broome Street in SoHo, he later became one of the early pioneers in TriBeCa—where his studio remains to this day. The analytical artistic approaches in New York—especially the visual language of grids, modularity as well as the aesthetics of industrial manufacturing—had a profound impact on the artist and shifted his work away from the luscious opticality of the early works made in Southern California. He focused his attention on structure and seriality, solidifying a connection to artists such as Anne Truitt and Donald Judd.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Dudley explored modular and serial structures with monochromatic color schemes as well as site-specific spatial installations, exhibiting in “Corners” at MIT Vera List Art Center in 1979 and mounting solo shows at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in 1982 and New Museum of Contemporary Art in 1984. Select group exhibitions at major institutions include Contemporary American Painting at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (1972); Double Take at New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY (1978); and Activated Walls at the Queens Museum of Art, New York, NY (1984).

After a twenty-five year hiatus from exhibiting, Dudley’s work was rediscovered in 2011 to great acclaim. Recent solo exhibitions include Don Dudley: New Work, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2022); Don Dudley: Early Work, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2019); Don Dudley: Activated Walls and Recent Works, Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne, DE (2018); Don Dudley: Recent Work, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2017); Modular Spaces, Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne, DE (2013); Don Dudley, I-20 Gallery, New York, NY (2011); and Don Dudley, Mendes Wood, São Paulo, BR (2011).

Born in 1930, Los Angeles, CA

Lives and works in New York, NY and Kerhonkson, NY

November 16 2022

TWO COATS OF PAINT

SOLO SHOWS

Don Dudley's pure authenticity

Contributed by Adam Simon / In 1979, Don Dudley, whose solo exhibition "New Work" is now on view at Magenta Plains, installed *Red Corner* in a group exhibition at the Vera List Art Center of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In doing so, he essentially reshaped the room, flattening the corner, obliterating any sense of spatial depth. *Red Corner* consisted of what appeared to be 23 parallel strips of Homasote, a cellulose-based fiberboard, used widely for soundproofing and cheap construction. The strips were two inches wide, hand-painted light red, with two-inch spaces between the strips that acted as white forms alternating with the red of the painted Homasote. The configuration increased in length as it moved from top and bottom towards the middle, but the ordering principle at some point gave out, and an irregular shape emerged that looked like an abortive attempt at pure geometry.

Red Corner was not the first of Dudley's modular installations, but it was exemplary of his concerns at the time. The two perpendicular walls morphed into what appeared as a flat surface holding an image. There was something slightly off about it, though. It lacked the industrial rigor of Donald Judd, the pure presence of Ellsworth Kelly, or the equanimity of Anne Truitt. Each horizontal strip was composed of multiple eight-inch segments, held to the wall by single nails. The visible nail heads and the cracks between the segments were odd compositional elements. Why not use longer strips, cut to size, adhered in a less obvious way?



Don Dudley, #174, 2021, Acrylic on birch plywood, 44 x 70 x 3 inches



Don Dudley: Red Corner, 1979, acrylic on Homasote, 20 feet wide; installed at I-20 in 2011 (via Art in America)

Red Corner was not the first of Dudley's modular installations, but it was exemplary of his concerns at the time. The two perpendicular walls morphed into what appeared as a flat surface holding an image. There was something slightly off about it, though. It lacked the industrial rigor of Donald Judd, the pure presence of Ellsworth Kelly, or the equanimity of Anne Truitt. Each horizontal strip was composed of multiple eight-inch segments, held to the wall by single nails. The visible nail heads and the cracks between the segments were odd compositional elements. Why not use longer strips, cut to size, adhered in a less obvious way?

A Norwegian philosopher once told me that 1970s Minimalism was the type of art that he felt most corresponded with philosophical thought. I had only a rudimentary knowledge of Western philosophy, but I knew what he said was true – not in the sense that Minimalism was the most profound or far-reaching art, but in the sense that it constituted a rigid interrogation of first principles. Dudley's work has always existed somewhere between Minimalist purity and a less clearly defined realm that partakes of the gestural, the atmospheric and the associative. In this he offers a heterodoxy that feels less austere and therefore timely. His minimalism has always had a West Coast flavor, more concerned with perception than objecthood. Like many artists of his generation, he has steered clear of expressionism, or anything that shifted attention from the object to the artist. His focus has been on the purely visual.



Don Dudley, #180, 2020, India inks, acrylic, colored pencil on paper, 31 3/4 x 24 3/16 x 2 inches

Before moving to New York from California in 1969, Dudley was associated with the Finish Fetish school of West Coast abstraction, creating highly finished prismatic works that conjured a feeling of the sublime in nature. Later, after the monochrome modular works such as *Red Corner*, there were other site-specific installations in which geometric shapes incorporated gestures and colors, appearing as rendered surfaces, like badly scuffed floors. Throughout there were drawings which, like the large-scale works, ranged from the diagrammatic to the fully pictorial. This range is evident in Dudley's current show, which features four plywood constructions on one floor and works on paper on another.



Magenta Plains Gallery: Don Dudley, New Work, 2022, Installation View

The works on paper reflect a kind of thwarted formalism. Rendered in ink, acrylic, and colored pencil, vaporous expanses of multi-hued colors are air-brushed into what would otherwise be simple arrangements of geometric shapes. There are intimations of sky, cast light, and weather, but always within delineated shapes that interact with other shapes of flat color. It's a convincing amalgam. Somehow, the atmospheric and geometric coexist in a believable, non-referential dreamscape. Dudley's birch plywood constructions are installed in a below-ground gallery, a large, airy room with high ceilings. The four works are elegantly hung, one to each wall, so that the wall becomes part of each piece, a negative complement to the constructed forms.

For me, the show's masterworks are the two pieces that most resolutely declare their objectness: *#174* and *Untitled*. Both are birch plywood constructions of mostly solid color – red and black for *#174*, and red, black and yellow for *Untitled*. In each there is an underlying tension between the pictorial and the literal. Suggested spatial shifts or alignments of forms are either contradicted or made redundant by what the plywood shapes are physically doing. Like most of Dudley's constructions, these works exist at the intersection of painting and sculpture. Both seem immutable. At the same time, they contain multiple traces of the hand, glitches, odd spaces and missed connections. It's hard to convey in words, but there is an uncanny feeling of something so authentic that it feels like deception. Time stops.



Don Dudley, Untitled, 2019, Acrylic on birch plywood, 87h x 68w x 2 1/2d inches

It is the dialectic between facticity – the object declaring its objectness – and pictorialism that ultimately energizes Dudley's work, one informing the other. At age 90, he continues to represent a merging of these seemingly opposed aesthetic phenomena, resisting easy classification in favor of a singular vision – nail heads, cracks, and all.

September 8, 2023

WE PRESENT

Don Dudley — A 70-year
painting practice exploring
shape and color composition



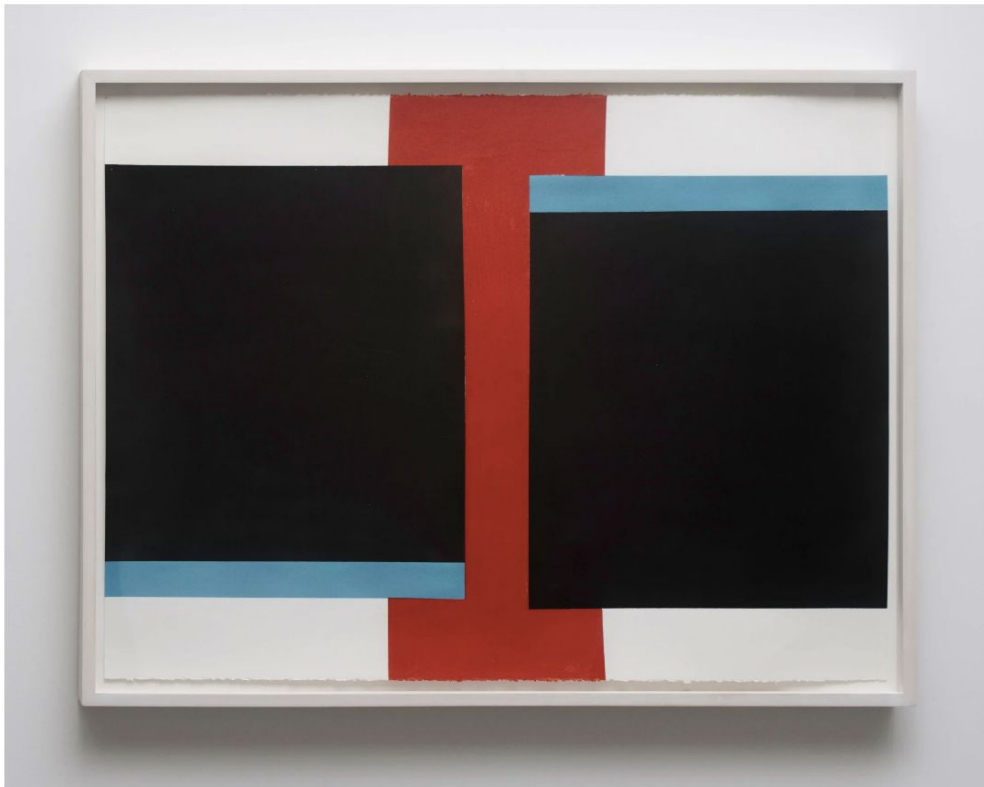
#234, 2021 (India ink, acrylic, colored pencil
on paper, 66.5cm x 80.65cm) — \$10,000

Don Dudley has led a colorful life. The Los Angeles native, who is now in his ninth decade, bridged the gulf between West and East Coast minimalism in the 1960s, and has dedicated his life to a pursuit of stunning color and illusionary compositions. He tells Holly Black how constant experimentation with material and media has evolved his practice over the years.

93-year-old Don Dudley's early practice was associated with South California's Finish Fetish school, where glossy, cinematic hues and industrial materials reigned supreme, and a move to New York in 1969 saw the influence of a more austere and formal sensibility.

Minimalist artmaking was dominated by experiments with unorthodox resources, and Dudley's practice has been no exception. "I have always tried to create paintings which are really luminous, in which the colors are declaratively bright," he says. "I've tried working on canvas and Masonite, but both surfaces absorb the light too much. I was inspired by industrial paint on custom cars in the 1960s, and how specific the different color palettes were. Using aluminum or Homasote [a type of fiber board] as a surface, and automobile paint as the medium, I could achieve the kinds of finishes I was after."

Utilizing such materials has not always been an easy task. Dudley recalls that once he had moved to NYC, metalworkers could not work out how to conform aluminum sheets to his specification, which often involved gentle curves or bends. "I brought the cut pieces back to my loft and decided to paint them flat and combine them into single works," he says, showing how troubleshooting often leads to new forms of experimentation. —By Holly Black



#203, 2021 (India ink, acrylic, colored pencil
on paper, 66.5cm x 80.65cm) — \$10,000



EBECHO MUSLIMOVA

Ebecho Muslimova, known for her raucous and sexually uninhibited character "Fatebe" creates paintings and works on paper that beguile the eye as much as they humor the mind. Fatebe's physical contortions and unpredictable quandaries play themselves out like performances on the canvas: each work depicts a single event that uncannily combines self-consciousness, comedy and vulnerability. Muslimova's technical prowess as a painter helps to underscore the sheer delight of Fatebe's misadventures. "As her life continues, Fatebe is faced with newly articulated objects, stretched over landscapes that are populated with new temptations and ghosts. With adoring precision, Muslimova codifies the echoes of domesticity, luxury, nature, education, psychology, fetish, and art itself—images that have the capacity to haunt her. Nothing can deter Fatebe, though. From her gleeful smile, we can assume that her convictions only gain momentum with every new opportunity to test them." (Quote from Natasha Stagg, Cura Magazine).

Muslimova received her BFA at Cooper Union in New York, NY in 2010. Muslimova has presented solo exhibitions at Magenta Plains, New York, NY; The Drawing Center, New York, NY; David Zwirner Gallery, London, UK; Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zürich, CH; White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO and Room East, New York, NY. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Kunstmuseum Basel, CH; ICA Miami, FL; Renaissance Society, Chicago, IL; Zuzeum, Riga, LV; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Kunsthalle St. Gallen, CH. Her large-scale murals have been commissioned for biennials such as The Dreamers, 58th Edition of October Salon, Belgrade, RS and The 32nd Biennale of Graphic Arts: Birth As Criterion, Ljubljana, SI. In 2022 Muslimova was the recipient of the Borlem Prize, honoring artists whose oeuvre brings awareness to mental health issues & struggles. Her work has been featured in publications such as Forbes, The New York Times, Artforum, Art in America, Mousse, Artnet, Hyperallergic, and Cura Magazine, among others. Muslimova is included in Jeffrey Deitch's book, Unrealism, featuring 27 artists and major essays by Johanna Fateman, Alison Gingeras, and Aria Dean.

Born 1984, Makhachkala, Dagestan, RU
Lives and works in Mexico City, MX

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February 9 2023

The New York Times

Art Gallery Shows to See in February

CHINATOWN

Ebecho Muslimova

Through Feb. 25, Magenta Plains, 149 Canal Street, Manhattan; 917-388-2464; magentaplains.com.

Fatebe, the fleshy, deathless doodle that Ebecho Muslimova created over a decade ago, is often referred to as the artist's alter ego, though that's not quite right. Fatebe is pure id, perpetually nude, hypersexed and overserved, her ample folds flapping unshyly and her orifices consuming or extruding wonder and horror in equal measure. A flat, fluid line drawing whose urges know no refusal, she's almost elegant, if you squint, like an Al Hirschfeld caricature on a bender. She exists somewhere between Cronenbergian body horror and complete liberation.

She returns here, in eight large-scale scenes on Dibond aluminum panels that read like history paintings or a hallucinatory Tintin adventure: Our heroine, rendered in jittering oil-slick strokes on sumptuously chromatic fields, is yoked to a stagecoach, vaults over a churning whirlpool and is plunged into a mammoth aspic kholodets swelling with cold meat. Her body remains endlessly elastic, able to gleefully disgorge a ghastly mountain of plastic e-waste or spit out its own skeleton.

These images are comically surreal but also inescapably dark: psychic pain worked out into the shape of a gag. Fatebe's death drive never stalls; she peers into the void or inflicts self-harm. Yet her flirtation with her own demise never comes to an unhappy end. Despite the increasingly baroque states of humiliation and Tex Avery-style violence Muslimova creates, Fatebe resists abjection. What she endures is no more absurd than what the rest of us must. The difference is she's found a way to laugh. *MAX LAKIN*



Ebecho Muslimova's "Fatebe Sunrise On Ice," 2022. via Ebecho Muslimova and Magenta Plains, New York; Photo by Object Studies

Artforum
September 10 2022

ARTFORUM



Ebecho Muslimova.

September 10, 2022 at 2:58pm

EBECHO MUSLIMOVA WINS \$40,000 BORLEM PRIZE

Ebecho Muslimova has been named the 2022 recipient of the Borlem Prize, awarded annually since 2021 to an artist whose work draws attention to mental health issues. She will receive an unrestricted grant of \$20,000, with the same amount donated in her name to the charity of her choice, which the prize organizers stipulate must be in the service of suicide prevention or mental health advocacy. Muslimova selected the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline as the recipient of the donation. The prize was founded by collector, composer, and researcher Roberto Toscano in honor of his late brother, Fernando Toscano (1986–2018).

The New York–based Muslimova, who earned her BFA from Cooper Union, is well known for her work centering around the fictional character Fatebe, an alter-ego she created while in college to absorb her anxieties and to function as a surrogate, or avatar, for the artist in day-to-day life. Curvy, confident, exaggeratedly sexual, and always depicted in the nude, the cartoonish Fatebe

embodies both a zest for living and the rejection of societal standards attendant upon the female body and of the sexual mores imposed upon women.

“I am immensely honored to receive the Borlem Prize,” said Muslimova, citing the occasion as “a special opportunity to bring attention to the essential work of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. The cruel illusion of suffering alone must be dispelled,” she continued. “Suicide only magnifies pain and creates a ripple effect of suffering.”

The prize jury this year was chaired by Alex Gartenfeld, artistic director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, and additionally composed of Elena Filipovic, director of the Kunsthalle Basel; independent curator and historian Mark Godfrey; Hou Hanru, artistic director of MAXXI in Rome; Gianni Jetzer, curator-at-large for the Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC; Luigia Lonardelli, a curator at MAXXI; and Evrim Oralkan, cofounder and CEO of online digital museum Collecteurs.

Describing himself as “delighted” that Muslimova was named the winner of the prize, Gartenfeld noted that her “work in drawing and painting provocatively explores complex psychological states. With humor, intelligence and invention, Ebecho’s work empowers viewers to ask questions and think critically about the body, intimacy, and the fraught experience of being alive.”



JANE SWAVELY

Jane Swavely studied at Boston University and the School of Visual Arts, eventually settling into her Bowery loft in the early 1980s. Working as a studio assistant to Brice Marden at just 21 years old, Swavely embarked on her own artistic path. In 1986, she held her first solo exhibition at CDS Gallery. As her career progressed, Swavely became part of A.I.R, a legendary female-run art space founded in the 1970s. A.I.R provided her with five solo exhibitions, showcasing the depth and breadth of her talent over the years.

Swavely's paintings attempt to reconcile romanticism with minimalism, with wide, vibrant brushstrokes. Her works reference landscapes or nature and often include cinematic elements. The interruption, like that of a frame in a film, is a recurring feature. By working with her canvases laid out on the floor, she allows gravity to shape the art, resulting in paintings that become windows into captivating worlds while possessing an insistent objecthood.

In her own words, "Thinking about film has always been a constant albeit subconsciously, the way shots are framed and cropped, light coming from within. These later paintings are a result not just of being in the landscape but also of inordinate amount of screen time and the light from the screen; a sort of green screen where anything is possible. These paintings come from a zeitgeist of images and work that I am looking at along with my experience in the natural world, in the landscape. The state of the environment and the toxic colors interrupt any sort of romanticism the paintings may have."

Born in 1959, Allentown, PA
Lives and works in New York City, NY

HaberArts
January 19, 2024

Women Remake Abstraction

Holding in the light

John Haber
in New York City

When Jane Swavely calls a painting *Silver OID*, silvery it is. It does not need metallic paint or glitter, just oil on canvas to shine. It does not need shifting reflections as one's eye crosses its surface or one's body walks beside. It attains that sense of visual and material substance with paint alone, the brush carrying pools of white as it will, covering and mixing with gray. It looks back to a time when painting pretty much meant painting in oil, for its ability to lend depth to a flat surface by holding in the light.

Not that everyone back in the day needed oil. Enamel and industrial paint were good enough for Jackson Pollock now and then, for their shine and low cost, but then he also threw in cigarette butts and coins. Still, Swavely looks back, in her scale and commitment to abstract art as well. Paintings can run up to ninety inches high, and the sixth in the series is ninety inches square. She likes how large paintings are that much more visual and material.

That version looks to a different postwar artist, too. A broad stripe descends the full height of the painting, much like "zips" for Barnett Newman. Swavely is thoroughly contemporary, and her paintings are and new, but then the Jewish Museum has argued for Newman's relevance to art today. Her zip, like his, cannot so easily stick to the edge or center of the canvas. Here its right edge falls just to the right of center. Still, it has fluid edges, much as Newman sometimes allowed his brush to show in a zip while keeping the background color seemingly untouched.



Hold on, though, for she is not just reworking the past. Blacks lend depth to that deep red vertical, much as whites lend silver to gray. The stripe is also more than a foot wide, like brushstrokes for David Reed, and another painting devotes roughly its left half to much the same rust and blood red. One could almost see the halves in collision, were the boundary not so loose and permeable. One could almost see the gray as background, were the brushwork on both halves or within the larger silver field and the stripe not so much the same. Other paintings defy the very thought of a zip, as one color climbs the right edge and crosses over the top.

They may look as if they date to the 1950s, but Swavely is not history. Born in 1959, she has long exhibited with A.I.R., the women's collective in Dumbo. Just starting out, she assisted Brice Marden and Lois Lane at that. One can see Marden's equation of monochrome color fields with drawing in her abstract painting—and Lane's *New Image* painting, like that of Jennifer Bartlett and Susan Rothenberg, in her refusal of purity. The material nature of paint here is just that, a step into this world, not a higher calling. She might cringe at Newman's "The Sublime Is Now."

She fits with the present interest in overlooked women in abstraction, although she has exhibited regularly since the 1980s. She may still seem to fall between generations or run across them. Yet her work is a powerful alternative to the "everything goes" version of the revival of painting or, for that matter, to the zip. Past shows have presented a still greater depth, using dark, resonant colors with elusive outlines. There, too, she insists on that visual and material substance. It carries her from deep red against silver to color climbing the wall.

Jane Swavely at Magenta Plains through February 24.

Two Coats of Paint
January 18, 2024

TWO
COATS OF
PAINT

SOLO SHOWS

Jane Swavely and the Bowery tradition



Jane Swavely, OID #3 Green, 2021, oil on canvas, 56 x 44 inches

Contributed by Michael Brennan / **Magenta Plains** is located on the Bowery, just as it breaks left onto Canal Street, in Chinatown. Upon entering, viewers are immediately greeted by a washy *terre verte* Jane Swavely painting, *OID #3 Green*, hanging above the desk. It sets an organic tone and is indicative of the half-dozen paintings to follow, hanging in the first-floor main gallery. Swavely's seven canvases are all vertical, and are mostly diptychs, internalized or externalized. They are loosely painted with a 2- to 2 1/2-inch flat brush, heavy on the solvent, with some wiping away by hand. Much color mixing happens directly on the surface. Swavely favors flared, phosphorescent hues. She cleverly manipulates paint with rags to create the illusion of light emitting from the ground. Her work glows, appearing backlit. **Mark Rothko** would often talk about the effects of his timeworn brushes, but **Milton Resnick** revealed that Rothko secretly rendered most of his effects through wiping, adding and subtracting with rags. Swavely is after a different visual feel but employs similar means.

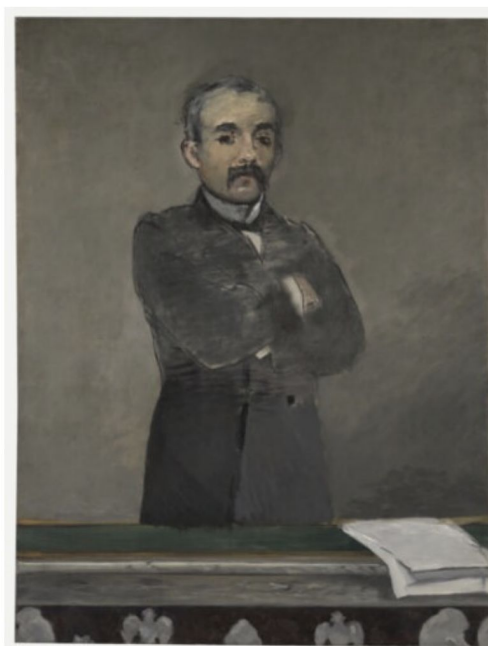


Jane Swavely, *Light Trap #2*, 2023, oil on canvas, 73 x 61 inches

Swavely's paintings begin and end *in media res*, that is, in the middle of the action. There's not much distinction between background and foreground, underpainting and finish, beginning and end. She prefers her work to appear "super fresh" and not "labored," as she noted in a [2022 *Two Coats of Paint* interview](#). I prefer paintings that err on the side of unfinished as opposed to overworked. [Sharon Butler](#) explored this tension in some depth in connection with the MetBreuer exhibition "[Unfinished: Thoughts Left Visible](#)" in 2016. For anyone skeptical of the preference, I offer two Manet paintings of French prime minister Georges Clemenceau:



Musee d'Orsay: Edouard Manet, *Georges Clemenceau* (1879-1880), oil on canvas, 37 x 29.5 inches (94 x 73.8 cm)



Kimbell Art Museum: Edouard Manet, *Portrait of Georges Clemenceau* (1879-1880), oil on canvas, 45 5/8 x 34 3/4 in. (115.9 x 88.2 cm)

Is the more finished painting on the right actually better? I think the less finished one is the livelier of the pair, and Swavely makes a strong argument for leaving well enough alone. It takes considerable maturity for any artist to recognize when the time is right to step out of a painting, and then simply to stop.

Paintings, of course, embody the artist's lineage. Swavely's might begin with **Olga Rozanova** and run through **Moira Dryer**.



Kremlin Museum: Olga Rozanova, 1917, oil on canvas, (28 x 19.2 inches / 71.2 x 49 cm)



Moira Dryer, *Pop*, 1989, 2 parts: acrylic and wood, and steel.
Acrylic/wood: 48 x 61 inches. Steel Plate: 31 x 13 inches.
Courtesy of Van Doren Waxter.



Jane Swavely, *Light Trap #4*, 2023, oil on canvas, 90 x 45 inches



Jane Swavely, *Light Trap #3*, 2023, oil on canvas, 90 x 45 inches

Her two diptychs, with their internalized fissure and doubly gnashing edges, recall **Barnett Newman's** notion of "The Plasmic Image" and **Günther Förg's** post-modern reboots with their lightning bolt drop.



Barnett Newman, Ulysses, 1990, oil on canvas, 132 x 50 inches / (335.3 x 127 cm)



Gunther Förg, Untitled, 1990, acrylic on lead, 94 1/2 x 63 inches (240 x 160cm)

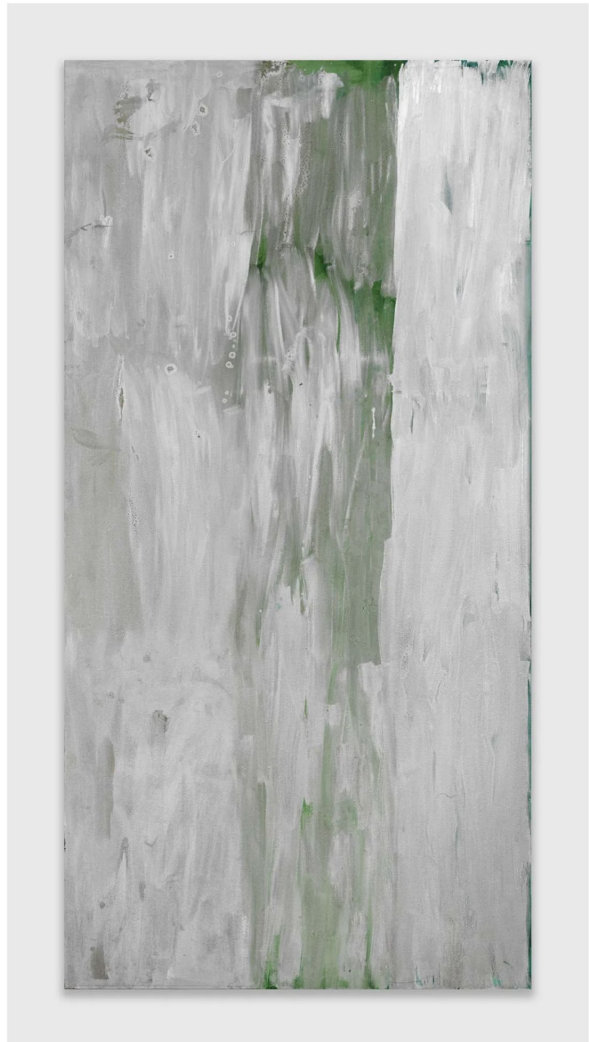
Swavely is most adept in her use of silver paint and finds an extraordinary range of value between light and dark in this color. Silver paint – in particular, metallic aluminum paint – has a long history in "American Type Painting," beginning with **Jackson Pollock** and running through to **Frank Stella** and **Andy Warhol**. Swavely's use of silver is closer to **Warhol's Hollywood silver-screen mode**. Many contemporary painters, such as **Jacqueline Humphries**, likewise use silver as a media signifier. Reinforcing Swavely's reference to cinema is the narrow profile of her stretchers, which nearly sink into the wall, unlike the blocky, more object-like presence of standard heavy-duty stretchers. Swavely considers all interpretations.

MAGENTA

PLAINS



Jane Swavely, Magenta OID, 2023, oil on canvas, 90 x 45 inches



Jane Swavely, Silver OID #7, 2022, oil on canvas, 90 x 45 inches



Jaqueline Humphries, NMM...MMM, 2023



Jane Swavely, Silver OID #6, 2022, oil on canvas, 90 x 90 inches



John Millei, Quicksilver #6, 1991, acrylic on canvas, 132 x 132 inches (335.3 x 335.3cm)

John Millei is another contemporary painter who is accomplished at parsing silver, but his acrylic work is flatter and less nuanced than Swavely's oil paint, with its lively interplay of light.

Finally, I appreciate that Swavely, a longtime Bowery denizen, is showing in her own neighborhood. It anchors the context of her abstraction, the Bowery being home at one time or another to its own distinctive subset of New York School artists, including Rothko, **Cy Twombly**, **Eva Hesse**, **Robert Ryman**, and **Brice Marden**. Swavely is pushing the same line, kicking some life into a storied tradition, moving it forward, and keeping it super fresh with modernist painting that raises questions and possibilities rather than enclosing itself in quotations and remaining categorically frozen.



Magenta Plains Gallery: Jane Swavely, Paintings, 2024, Installation View



RACHEL ROSSIN

Rachel Rossin is an internationally renowned artist and programmer whose multi-disciplinary practice has established her as a pioneer in the field of virtual reality. Rossin's work blends painting, sculpture, new media and more to create digital landscapes that address the impact of technology on human psychology, embodiment, sovereignty, and phenomenology.

The New York Times has stated "Ms. Rossin has achieved something, forging a connection between abstract painting and augmented perception that opens up a fourth dimension that existed only in theory for earlier painters."

Rachel Rossin's works have been exhibited at prestigious institutions around the world; including the KW Institute of Contemporary Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, Kiasma Museum of Helsinki, K11: Shanghai, The New Museum, Rhizome, The Hyundai Museum of Seoul, GAMEC of Bergamo Italy, HEK of Münchenstein Basel Switzerland, 'Kim' Museum of Riga Latvia, The Sundance Film Festival, The Carnegie Museum of Art and the Casino Museum of Luxembourg. In addition to her artistic practice, Rossin has also lectured at Stäedelschule, Google, MIT, Stanford, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and her work has been published in several notable publications, such as "Video/Art: The First Fifty Years" published by Phaidon, "Chimeras, Inventory of Synthetic Cognition" by the Onassis Foundation, and "Chaos and Awe: Painting for the 21st Century" by MIT Press.

Rossin's works are in the permanent collection of institutions such as Borusan Contemporary Museum of Art in Istanbul, The Zabłudowicz Collection, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Her work has been widely covered in the press, including National Geographic, The New York Times, The BBC, The Guardian, Al Jazeera, Wired Magazine, and many others.

Rossin was recently co-commissioned by the KW Institute of Contemporary Art in Berlin and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York to create an installation and digital artwork entitled THE MAW OF. This work was also included in Refigured, a group exhibition at the Whitney in Spring 2023.

Born 1987, West Palm Beach, FL
Lives and works in New York, NY

Houston Chronicle

February 1, 2024

CHRON.

Virtual reality meets childhood tale in new Cistern art installation

"Haha Real" takes inspiration from modern technology, "The Velveteen Rabbit," Marcel DuChamp and 18th-century English gardens

By [Brittanie Shey](#)



Haha Real, by New York-based artist Rachel Rossin, is on display in the Buffalo Bayou Cistern through Nov. 10.
Zainob+Mathew Create

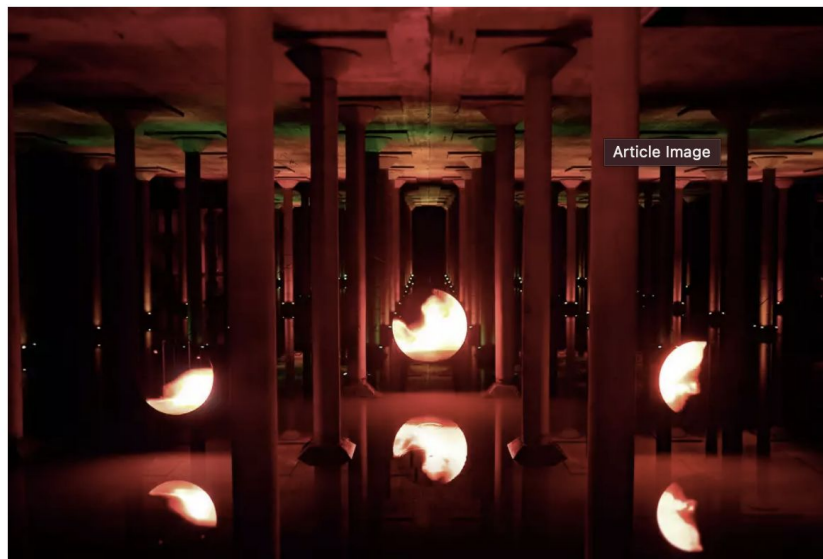
A new installation at the [Buffalo Bayou Cistern](#) blends machine learning, [AI](#) animation techniques, and video-game engine graphics to create a journey inspired by the classic children's book *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

The Buffalo Bayou Partnership teamed up with pioneering New York-based artist and programmer [Rachel Rossin](#) to create the exhibit, called "Haha Real." Musician and native Houstonian [Frewuhn](#) created the score for the installation. The exhibit opens Feb. 2 and will be on view through Nov. 10.

The *Velveteen Rabbit*, first published in 1921, tells the story of a stuffed rabbit toy who longs to become a real bunny. The rabbit spends his days in the company of his owner, a young boy sick with scarlet fever. As part of the boy's recovery, his doctor recommends that he be sent to the English seaside and that all his possessions, including his books and toys, be burned as a means of getting rid of the disease. Before the rabbit is to be burned, he is rescued by a fairy, who tells him that the boy's love for him has made him real. The rabbit then joins the other rabbits in the forest, returning occasionally to the boy's home to check in on his former owner from afar.

As part of the exhibition, guests are meant to walk the Cistern in a counter-clockwise path, following the rabbit on its journey. The 20-minute experience opens with images of bright red flames, before finally revealing a digitally rendered bunny that hops and hides between the Cistern's 221 columns.

"The question 'What is REAL?' is central," according to a press release on the installation. "After the child who loved the Rabbit into being grows up and moves on, the Rabbit learns that 'Realness' is both liberating and painful and is attained gradually over time through being loved (and ultimately lost) by another."



"Haha Real," by New York-based artist Rachel Rossin, is on display in the Buffalo Bayou Cistern through Nov. 10.
Zainob+Mathew Create

Of the many light installations that have been displayed in the Cistern since its opening in 2016, "Haha Real" is one of the most visually impressive. The magic is made by a series of mesh LED screens that are suspended throughout the subterranean space. Rossin has programmed the screens, whose visuals also reflect off the few inches of standing water at the bottom of the reservoir.

The journey is accompanied by music from Frewuhn, using both Frewuhn's and Rossin's voices. Rossin, whose previous work explores ideas of autonomy vis-à-vis the use of technology, used machine learning to recreate her own childhood voice, sourced from home videos, for the audio. The use of virtual reality and voice-cloning technology furthers the work's central question of what is real.

During a recent media walkthrough, Rossin spoke of collaborating with Frewuhn, whom she met through the Weingarten Art Group, which helped BBP coordinate the installation.

"When I was editing that last part with Fre's voice—it still makes me tear up," she said.

One of Rossin's other inspirations is a lecture given by artist Marcel Duchamp in 1957, called [The Creative Act](#). The lecture, which describes the changes a work of art—and the artist making it—goes through, from idea to creation, was delivered at the [American Federation of Arts' annual convention](#), which took place that year at Houston's Shamrock Hilton Hotel.

"The highly desirable state of realness is also a cycle of constant change and occasional heartbreak," Rossin said in the installation's press release. "From awareness to disillusionment and back again, with an overarching goal of remaining present."

The term "ha-ha" refers to a recessed area in landscape design commonly used in 18th-century English gardens. Sometimes it's a sunken fence, sometimes it's a ditch, but the distinguishing characteristic is that it still provides an uninterrupted view of the landscape, while still acting as a barrier. It's easy to see how this term applies to the Cistern, which was considered "[hidden](#)" until it reopened as an art space in 2016.

Karen Farber, BBP's vice president of external affairs, said of the installation, "It is a totally unique vision."

In addition to the LED screens, the artwork includes other elements that make use of the Cistern's unique space and thin pool of standing water. But to reveal too much would spoil the wonder of this magical experience. Speaking of her love for video games and programming, Rossin threw in a little hint about the work.

"There are lots of Easter eggs in the piece," she said.

The New York Times
28 July 2023

The New York Times

What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in July

By Holland Cotter, Blake Gopnik, Max Lakin, Travis Diehl, Martha Schwendener,
Will Heinrich, Dawn Chan, John Vincler, Jillian Steinhauer and Seph Rodney

Published July 5, 2023 Updated July 27, 2023

Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Check out “Luxe, Calme, Volupté” on the Lower East Side or “Reclamation” at Hudson Yards. And don’t miss Rachel Rossin’s “mechs” in Chinatown.

CHINATOWN

Rachel Rossin

Through Aug. 11. Magenta Plains, 149 Canal Street, Manhattan; 917-388-2464,
magentaplains.com.



Installation view of “Rachel Rossin: SCRY” at Magenta Plains. On the ceiling, Rossin’s “The Maw Of” Screen 4, 2022. via Rachel Rossin and Magenta Plains

The ground floor gallery at Magenta Plains is configured as a chapel — but of what faith? The New York artist Rachel Rossin is as much a programmer as a painter, and her exhibition embroiders the boundaries around “the human” with knowing reverence. On a round LED screen mounted to the ceiling, the video “The Maw Of” pans and zooms through 3-D renderings of disembodied nerves and skeletons, glowing networks, and the orange and blue blobs of bodies viewed in infrared. It’s a celestial tondo of the posthuman, a portal to the angels or their digital avatars. It turns the room red.

On the curved back wall hang five portraits of “mechs” — robotic suits of anime armor. Their purplish, blurred silhouettes seem printed on top of the ridges of milky paint depicting pale, layered figures and puddling abstractions. In “Just like Velveteen Rabbit, Mech Standing,” the largest and center panel, the mech’s beatific pose echoes an obscure, winged shape sketched into the pulsing lavender shadows in butter yellow and grass. Several, such as “SCRY. 1 Corinthians 13:12,” a picture in minty pastels where the mech’s pilot’s face punches through the haze, incorporate line drawings of dragons labeled Bad or Good in a naïve hand; others feature angels. The apostle Paul had heaven in mind when he wrote, in 1 Corinthians, that “now we see as through a glass darkly”; Rossin’s cyborg icons hold out that true vision might require a higher power, a congection of human and machine.

TRAVIS DIEHL



ZACH BRUDER

Zach Bruder's metaphorical approach to painting and long-term interest in image collecting results in inventive compositions in which both pictorial and illusionistic space play a role. Often humorous and allegorical, his paintings involve animals, architecture, and anthropomorphism. His canvases revive and repurpose familiar motifs, referencing folklore while finding new metaphors in simple objects and creatures. The source material—archetypal and drawing from classical and vernacular mythology—is culled from the artist's extensive archive of historic imagery. Addressing mythologies both cultural and personal, Bruder's paintings offer multiple interpretations of religious and social narratives and urgent responses to the societal and political moment in which they were produced. Valentina Di Liscia writes, "Faced with one of Bruder's canvases, the viewer takes an active role, deciphering the intertextuality between the multiple literary, historical, and folkloric references he often cites simultaneously."

Zach Bruder received his BFA at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Madison, WI. Bruder presented his first solo show at Magenta Plains in January 2018 in New York, NY followed by *Gone to Fair* in 2020, and *Clear Arrears* in 2023. Solo exhibitions have also been held at Harlan Levey, Brussels, BE; galerie l'inlassable, Paris, FR; Gregory Lind Gallery, San Francisco, CA; and LaMaMa Galleria, New York, NY. Bruder has been included in group shows at Peter Freeman, New York, NY; Ratio 3, San Francisco, CA; The Journal Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Phillip Slein Gallery, St. Louis, MO; and Magenta Plains, New York, NY. The artist lives and works in New York, NY.

Born 1984, Cleveland, OH
Lives and works in New York, NY

Hyperallergic
February 1, 2024

HYPERALLERGIC

15 Art Shows to See in New York This October

This month: Henry Taylor, Barkley L. Hendricks, Carlos Villa and Leo Valledor, Cecilia Paredes, and more.



Left: Zach Bruder, "Where You Please" (2023), acrylic and Flashe on linen, 72 x 60 inches; right: Zach Bruder, "Ascent" (2023), acrylic and Flashe on linen, 72 x 60 inches (photo Valentina Di Liscia/*Hyperallergic*)

Zach Bruder: Clear Arrears

Whether Zach Bruder paints delicate porcelain teacups and saucers floating in a salmon-pink haze or a rabbit hopping over a fence in a moonlit backyard littered with smiley-face stars ... okay, you get the idea: His works are weird, delightfully so. This exhibition features large-scale paintings rendered in Bruder's go-to materials, acrylic and Flashe, which he applies in layers to achieve varying degrees of opacity and fluidity that lend the compositions an unusual quality. Some of the motifs he explores here are drawn from observations and recollections of his upbringing in Cleveland, their meanings scrambled and reconfigured according to the logic of the 17th-century *Orbis Pictus*, one of the earliest examples of an illustrated children's textbook. It's a giddy trip down memory lane spiked with a shot of Americana, but make it spooky. —*Valentina Di Liscia*

Magenta Plains (magentaplains.com)
149 Canal Street, Chinatown, Manhattan
Through October 22

Elephant
September 2023



What to See in NYC: September Gallery Guide

New York – It is only halfway through September, and an overwhelming number of new exhibitions have already opened. This month, successful photographers eschew their commercial acclaim for more daring, personal works — stylized depictions of queer intimacy; figurative painters examine the real and imagined nooks and crannies of domestic spaces; and a new wave of young artists filter the moment through everything from glow-in-the dark fabric to woven tapestries to AI-technology to glitter.

I've rounded up some of the shows that I can't stop talking about, from [Gagosian's](#) posthumous Ashley Bickerton retrospective to [Strada's](#) inaugural exhibition to [Austin Martin White's](#) two concurrent solo shows.

In case you missed it, Mellány Sánchez's thoughtful sartorial installation "Objects of Permanence" at [Abrons Arts Center](#) closed yesterday. Two buzzy exhibitions just opened in Chelsea: Bárbara Sánchez-Kane at [Kurimanzutto](#) and Wolfgang Tillmans at David Zwirner, and Magenta Plain unveiled concurrent solo shows for [Daniel Boccato](#) and [Zach Bruder](#). If you're going to openings tonight, head downtown for Sydney Vernon's debut at [Kapp Kapp](#), before catching two must-see openings ten minutes away at [Company Gallery](#). Then end your night at [Lubov Gallery](#) for a performance by fashion designer Gogo Graham. This weekend, check out the shows below and stay tuned for part two later this month. Happy gallery-going!

Artforum
December 2020

ARTFORUM

Zach Bruder

Magenta Plains

By Charity Coleman ☼

Zach Bruder's thirteen acrylic-and-Flashe paintings formed a phantasmagoric time capsule of human endeavor, riddled with rupture. No matter how tidy or idealized, Bruder's places are more haunting than they are enlivened, as in the truncated colonial home of *Decorum* (all works cited, 2020), its dark innards at odds with the affable peachy hue of its exterior. In each of the canvas's four corners is a clock that features a well-heeled old-timey man captured midstride and looking purposeful. Not a leaf is amiss outdoors, and a brick wall behind the dwelling furthers a sense of stringency. *Coffer*, on the other hand, is a busy scene of a house being built. A golden ladder—perhaps Jacob's (a promise of heaven)—is propped against the wood frame of the unfinished home. The tableau has been painted as if viewed through the lens of a telescope, and it hovers above a partial rendering of Earth. In the work's lower-right-hand corner, two figures—pilgrims or wealthy merchants?—feast together at a table. Is this a parable of good fortune granted by God? Or a cautionary tale of gluttony?

The show's title, "Gone to Fair," resonates with an old Cornish festival song ringing in May Day, but when taken out of context it became a quaint flourish that complemented Bruder's agenda. Although the paintings cobbled together nostalgia, anachronism, and historical critique, they were not merely sentimental or sermonizing. Bruder's morphology of obsolescence takes on a Shaker sensibility in *Material Supply*, with tools such as a bellows, a scythe, a saw, a rake, and an ax arranged in a circle. A bucolic shepherding scene in *Valley* is reminiscent of American folk art. The scene is floaty and dreamy, and the stout farmhouses in the background are limned with warmth but seem desolate. The shepherd's face is masklike, the sheep look underfed, and a blackish cluster of distant trees is lithic. Two rows of decorative tulips at the top and bottom of the teal canvas—some of which are wilting—underscore a sense of vulnerability.

Particularly woebegone was the tortoise of *Make Haste Slowly*, an ancient entity on a field of regal purple; on its shell is a skeletal rendering of what appears to be the Colosseum. The toll of time could be read in the carapace. The work's title is from the Roman adage *Festina lente*, and the creature bears the weighty melancholy of ruins and old spooks. A prim little house outlined in one corner hovers while three beady-eyed human faces peer from violet depths. *Bounty* is a still life of fruit in twin arrangements: One is hyper-illuminated with glowing gold and yellow, the other a cool aggregation of stony blues. Cars are outlined in the background, barely visible.



Zach Bruder, *Bounty*, 2020, acrylic and Flashe paint on linen, 50 × 60".

The tension between past and present recurs throughout Bruder's paintings, as in a pair of works—*Made Ready* and *The Lesson*. These two canvases suggest the polarity of heaven and hell with figures in an underground bunker, framed by rows of identical houses and backgrounded by a grid. Each work depicts a sheaf of half-shredded documents which, according to the gallery's press release, represent the dissolution of knowledge and science. Instead of words on the cartoonish pages are horizontal lines that "read" as redacted text, deepening a sense of erasure. The artist's emphasis on this destruction raised the question of untold narratives, dubious origins, the buried trove. It imparted the sense of witnessing a book burning and called to mind a line from poet Susan Howe's 1993 book on early American literature, *The Birth-mark*: "... the word becomes an infinite chain leading us underground. Words are the only clues we have. What if they fail us?" Or what if we fail them? All those paper fragments are clueless wreckage, a deficit of culture. By reminding us of the checkered past, Bruder makes us aware of peril—as if our current political reality and precarious future weren't warning enough.