

# ZACH BRUDER

Zach Bruder (b. 1984, Cleveland, OH) 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. Other 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 Ratio 3, San Francisco, CA; The Journal Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Philip Slein Gallery, St. Louis, MO; and in *Downtown Painting* curated by Alex Katz at Peter Freeman, New York, NY. In 2020, the Public Art Fund commissioned Zach Bruder to participate in *Art on the Grid*, a series of images by artists on view at bus shelters and LinkNYC kiosks. Bruder has a forthcoming solo exhibition at Magenta Plains in 2023. Bruder lives and works in New York, NY.

*Hyperallergic*  
October 2023

Art

## 15 Art Shows to See in New York This October



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](http://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

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 sheepherding 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 x 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.

—Charity Coleman

BOMB Magazine  
October 2020

# BOMB

## Do I Know You? Zach Bruder Interviewed by Sara Roffino

*Paintings rich in reference and interpretation.*



Zach Bruder, *Coffer*, 2020, acrylic and Flashe on linen, 50 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Magenta Plains.

There's something equally gripping and disorienting about Zach Bruder's paintings. They stick in your skin like tiny, invisible barbs; they hit you like a scent you know but can't place. Trying to pinpoint what parts are familiar and why ends up being an exercise in sorting through your own internal image database, the memories you've constructed and stored—disjointed, inaccurate, possibly someone else's creation entirely. It's a bit like holding a conversation with someone you've met before but don't remember the person's name or anything about them. And yet, you're enthralled.

Bruder works out of a studio in Red Hook, Brooklyn, where he researches and mixes and matches, starting always from some pre-existing visual form to create paintings that sneak up on one's sense of knowing via questions and clues that span the history of visual experience—from ancient folklore to spam advertising. His [current show](#) at Magenta Plains continues his exploration of American history and its present, contextualized within ideas of empire at large and mythologies both ancient and modern.

—Sara Roffino

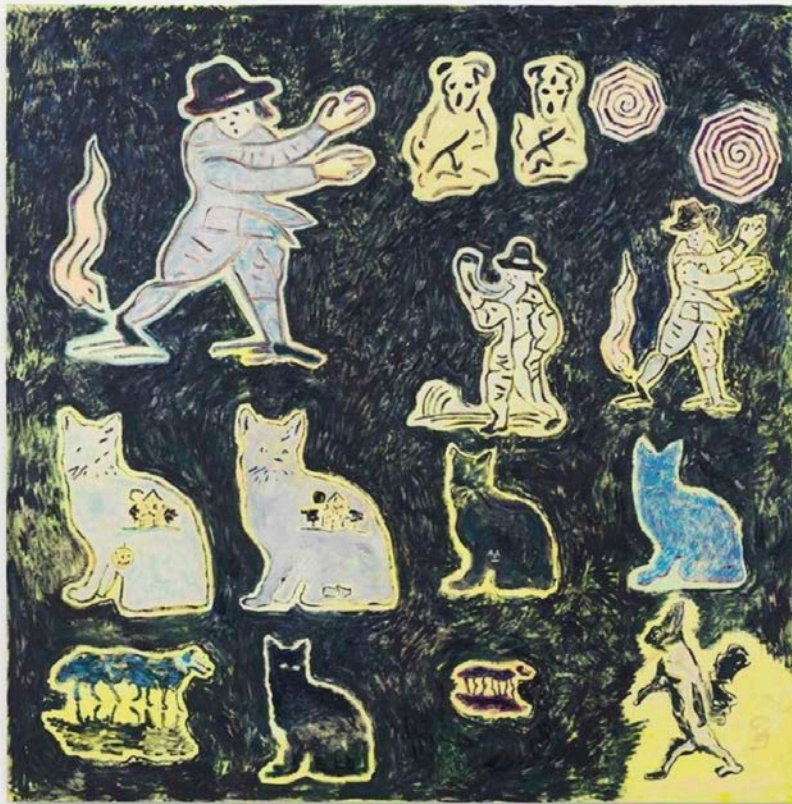
**Sara Roffino**

You've titled this show *Gone to Fair* as a play on the phrase "gone too far" as well as a way of touching on the multiple meanings of the word fair. You originally used the title *Gone to Fair* for a painting that was an interpretation of an Ambrosius Bosschaert work you found in the Aby Warburg photo archive. Tell me more about this work.

**Zach Bruder**

The Bosschaert is a still life from the Dutch Golden Age, which is one of my favorite periods of art history. When I was at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam a few years ago, it really hit me to realize that the creation of all of these incredible paintings was dependent on the Dutch empire. The magnitude of splendor, and understanding the sprawling economic system it was built on, further focused my attention on our own empire.

Growing up in Ohio, every summer we would visit the Champaign County Fair. We would spend time with relatives and view the animals they had raised via 4-H. While this contrasted with my suburban reality, I found it to be very matter of fact. It shares something with those Dutch still lifes. It's the point at which something turns into something else—and I think that's part of making art too. You make an artwork; it's a thing you're dealing with or working with; and then when you're done with it it's a painting, and then other people have a totally different relationship with it than you do. It's gone to market, gone to fair.



Zach Bruder, *Company II*, 2019, acrylic and Flashe on linen, 56 × 56 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Magenta Plains.



Zach Bruder, *The Lesson*, 2020, acrylic and Flashe on linen, 60 × 50 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Magenta Plains.

### SR

You're an avid reader and podcast listener, and I've come to think about your work always in relation to your politics and whatever is happening in the world. Perhaps that's also because of your 2016 La MaMa Gallery show, which prominently referenced the Gadsden flag and explored what now seems almost quaint conflicts around ideas of "America." It's quite startling to realize how much has changed since then. How did your current body of work—featuring houses and customhouses—evolve, and how does it engage with the things you are thinking about outside of the studio?

### ZB

The houses have their own identities and act as portraits. One of them, *Coffer* (2020), is under construction, or maybe it's being renovated. It's a treasury that's being built to protect or store what one holds of value, whether property or ideas. Another one, *Decorum* (2020), is sort of like a tomb. That one reminds me of depictions of Christ's tomb, with the rock rolled back. There's something in there that doesn't exist anymore. It has left this world, and time has either stopped or it's frozen.

And then there are the customhouses, which are about transaction. Customhouses used to be found on toll roads and at the city's entrance or other ports of entry; a tax collector would inspect your goods and decide whether or not you were allowed to enter whatever the next space was—going into a city or crossing a border. There were different qualifications for entry, and duties would need to be collected. There are a few works in the show that deal with the underworld, Orpheus, and customhouses in which I'm asking: What is the price to gain entry? In Ancient Greece, there wasn't just heaven or hell. There were different levels of the underworld that you could end up in. In a way it relates to the contemporary world where your life is totally determined by whatever door you came through. In the La Mama show a central theme was: When does one's freedom supersede another's freedom? I don't know if there's a clear answer, but it's an important question to pursue.

## SR

You worked in an art library in college, and you have worked as a registrar in galleries for more than a decade. These experiences of indexing, cataloging, listing, and recording have been fundamental in the development of your relationship to images and the way they function in your paintings. What is your process for deciding which images to work with and how do you see them functioning in your paintings?

## ZB

Being a registrar and a librarian has made me think of artworks as images in a system, which is very different from the work itself. Those images are placeholders for the thing, and they have their own lives, and the artworks have their own lives, and artists have their own lives, and viewers have their own lives with artworks. It's like a multiplicity of systems in which an image means different things to different people.

In terms of sourcing images, wandering is a really big part of the process for me. To walk around and happen upon an image that has been left behind for you is an incredible feeling of discovery. Whether the image is serendipitous or someone actively made the decision to place the image, they live on as ciphers or talismans—a piece of vital information. I experience this both in the real world and in the digital realm; it can be advertisements or even spam that is obviously there to sell something to you, but there is also art in it. When I see these little bits of art, something might hit these key words in my mind, and I will want to capture or record or archive it in my own database, my own system. I have a lot of image files, and there are a couple different platforms where I've saved things, and from there I work on the computer and figure out which ones I respond to most before I go to the studio. I'll collect maybe like twenty images that are connecting in some way on a subconscious level, and I'll go into the studio with that folder; and then when I am working, I might expand on that as I'm trying to see what image fits into the picture plane with other images. The way the images come together is sort of an ecosystem where things are reacting to one another, and it can be straightforward where one image is the base and there might not be other interventions, or it can be an interpretation of the image, and then other times they are built together in groups.

## ZB

Yes, for sure. I think a lot about the Greek myths of Prometheus, Orpheus and Eurydice, and Hermes as well as religious histories like Exodus and the Book of Job, and things like American Civil Religion, Robert Caro's books on Robert Moses and Lyndon Johnson, Adam Curtis's *Century of the Self*, Margaret Atwood and Philip K. Dick's various dystopias, and the film *Children of Men*.

All of these stories are interesting on their own, but what I find most fascinating is how they come together with shared archetypes. We have all these mythic cognates. For instance, Prometheus, who is the bringer of knowledge, to me relates to the snake in the Garden of Eden—a trickster that for better or worse leads the group on a path. The late German art historian Aby Warburg is also important to me. He was collecting myths and themes and the primary symbols that show up again and again in art history because they're so potent. When I think of these myths, I think about humans in this moment of late capitalism, and I think we're not really that different from other humans who existed before us. We might have a different societal structure, but the motivations aren't that different. No time was easier or simpler; all times are complex. Part of what is interesting to me about the Torah is that it is a tool for people to codify their lives. Religion can help people navigate all the things that can happen to a human. And these myths and images are a big part of that.

I also love medieval tapestries, illuminated manuscripts, and early printmaking; these are signals that have been sent to us from the past. They were images that had an immediate reading, and they functioned as propaganda since most people weren't literate, but major figures could be recognized. I don't want anyone to think art is any sort of therapy, but it is a way that I can look at my own existence, feelings, thoughts, and where I am and then hopefully share those ideas with someone else. Who knows what will survive when this civilization ends, but I would hope that there is something in these things that could be interpreted or sent onward for future interpretation.

Zach Bruder: *Gone to Fair* is on view at Magenta Plains in New York City until October 21.



Zach Bruder, *Made Ready*, 2020, acrylic and Flashe on linen, 50 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Magenta Plains.



## Snapshot of the Art World

October 2020

### David Ebony's NYC Autumn TOP 10

David Ebony



8.) Zach Bruder at [Magenta Plains](#) through October 21.

*Gone to Fair*, the title of this exhibition of recent paintings by Ohio-born New York artist Zach Bruder, 36, would appear to refer to some archaic country gathering or event, where foodstuffs and livestock would be brought to market. With spare, impressionistic brushwork, *Valley* (2020), for instance, shows a farmer or shepherd leading his flock of sheep through a verdant landscape, suggested by the lush, velvety green background, framed in a row of schematically rendered flowers. And the large *Bounty* (2020) shows two arrangements of fruits and vegetables, rendered with abbreviated brushstrokes and set against a bright orange background.

These centralized compositions in a limited but sumptuous palette, feature figures, animals and objects culled from the artist's extensive archive of antique images. They often recall a form of faux folk art. Here and there, though, Bruder leaves unresolved passages of furtive brushstrokes that add a significant amount of surface tension, and thus situate the works clearly within the discourse of contemporary painting.



Zach Bruder, *Divination*, 2020, Acrylic and Flashe on linen, 50 x 60 inches (127 x 152.4 cm).

Photo Courtesy Magenta Plains.

One of the most striking pieces, *Make Haste Slowly* (2020), shows a turtle skeleton against a deep, blue-purple background. Its cutaway body reveals the interior of the Pantheon in Rome, summarily rendered with feathery brushwork. Another memorable piece, *Divination* (2020), an oval-shaped composition, features two stylized fish swimming in a fishbowl. Since the artist's astrological sign is Pisces, there seems to be a self-referential or personal significance to the image. Its execution, however, conjures a work of ancient Roman painting or mosaic, especially of the early Christian period. This painting, as most of Bruder's work in *Gone to Fair*, evokes a more innocent time and place—a rather idyllic past. Sociopolitical strife and pandemic fears seem distant and unfathomable. Their obviously deliberate absence, however, is a statement unto itself, and ultimately underscores the uncertainty and anxiety of the present. ●

## New American Paintings

February / March 2020

## Zach Bruder

Brooklyn, NY  
 917.388.2464 (Magenta Plains)  
[www.zachbruder.com](http://www.zachbruder.com) / @zachbruder

**b. 1984 Cleveland, OH**

**Education**

2006 BFA, University of Wisconsin–Madison, WI

**Solo Exhibitions**

- 2018 *Edening On*, Magenta Plains, New York, NY  
 2017 *Hardscrabbled*, Harlan Levey Projects, Brussels, Belgium  
*Tennis Elbow*, The Journal Gallery, Brooklyn, NY  
 2016 *Unwelcome Guest*, La Galleria | La MaMa, New York, NY

**Group Exhibitions**

- 2018 *People, Places, Things...*, Philip Stein Gallery, St. Louis, MO  
*Code Art Fair*, w/ Monteverita, Copenhagen, Denmark  
*Landscape Modern Oil Painting*, Galleri Benoni, Copenhagen, Denmark  
*The Present Tense: Zach Bruder & Louise Bourgeois*, Ratio 3, San Francisco, CA  
 2016 *Monument Around*, Galerie l'inlassable, Paris, France  
*Plant in Repair*, Gregory Lind Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*Boundary Issues*, Gregory Lind Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*Record Lines This Summer*, Magenta Plains, New York, NY  
*Tropicália*, Galerie l'inlassable, Paris, France  
 2015 *Object of Magic*, MOIETY, Brooklyn, NY

**Represented by**

Magenta Plains, New York, NY

Zach Bruder's metaphorical approach to painting results in inventive compositions in which both pictorial and illusionistic space play roles. Humorous and allegorical, his paintings involve flora, architecture, and anthropomorphism. Bruder's canvases revive and repurpose familiar motifs from classical and vernacular mythology using source material from his extensive image archive amassed over the past decade. His paintings speak of today's world, conflating divergent pictorial influences from advertisements, caricatures, cartoons, photos, and paintings from this century and the last, flaunting the artist's ability to render different spatial dimensions and finding a humorous irony and cohesive unity in their discordance. Addressing mythologies both cultural and personal, Bruder's paintings offer multiple interpretations of social and religious narratives and urgent responses to the societal and political moment in which they were produced. Far from cynical, however, his work is not about denouncing hypocrisies but rather centered on capturing everyday paradoxes. Faced with one of Bruder's canvases, the viewer takes an active role, deciphering the intertextuality between the literary, historical, and folkloric references he often cites simultaneously.

**Bruder**



43



Zach Bruder

Faux Pas II, 2017 | acrylic and Flashe on linen, 60 x 72 inches

42



Zach Bruder

Good Neighbor I, 2018 | acrylic and Flashe on linen, 50 x 60 inches



Zach Bruder  
Who Is Minding the Shop?, 2017 | acrylic and Flashe on linen, 60 x 50 inches

*The Brooklyn Rail* (excerpt)

July 2019

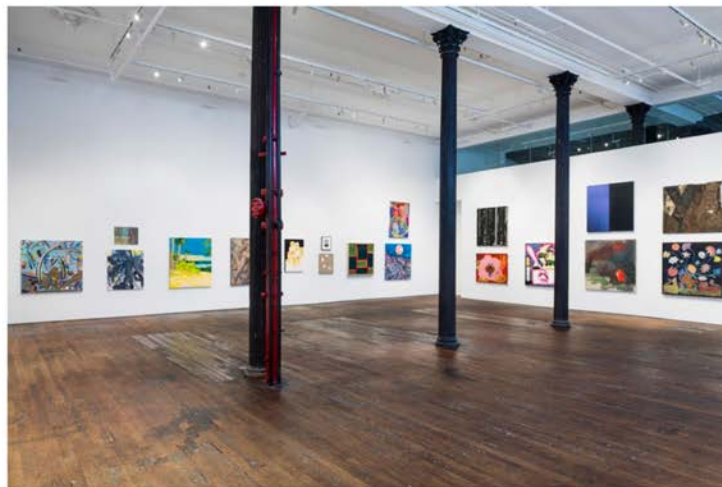
**ArtSeen***Downtown Painting*

Curated by Alex Katz

by Jonathan Goodman

Although *Downtown Painting* is primarily, by definition in terms, an urban show, there were some excellent studies of nature. Downes's work, *The Dakota from Just East of the Reservoir* (1966), set in the cold season, consists of two massive, leafless trees rising up just in front of the fence protecting the reservoir; the double towers of the Dakota loom in the distance. Zach Bruder's *Jardin* (2019) encompasses a wide array of colorful flowers, connected to each other by thin white stems. The background is black, while two feline creatures—likely a spotted leopard and a reddish lion—lie lazily beneath the blooms. Mangold's oil, *The Locust Trees 2/87* (1987), consists of two trees without leaves reaching upward into the center and upper register of the painting, the dark-brown branches offset by a pale white and blue sky. Nicole Wittenberg's *Windermere* (2019) is a sylvan scene—Windermere is the name of the largest lake in England—complete with a yellow-tan patch in the front, some dark green trees and bright, light green shrubbery on the left, and water in the distance. New York is hardly a place where such visions of nature occur, but the painting styles of the artists are independent and free—something to be expected from a show like this.

The abstract work, always a strength in New York, was notable for its excellence. Ernst Caramelle's *View of Untitled* (2014) is a strong non objective painting, mostly of linear bands, often white but including other colors—red, black, gray. Carmen Herrera, now older than a century, contributed an untitled work dating to 1966—two orange, L-shaped forms fitting into each other like pieces of a puzzle. Callum Innes is offering *Untitled Lamp Black No. 4* (2018), a minimal painting of two vertical halves—deep, dark blue on the left and black on the right. Udomsak Krisanamis's *Little Honda* (2011) is a painting densely composed of vertical bands through which bits of a white background peek through; the painting's strong graphic quality depends equally on its structure. *Untitled 1979* (1978) is a non objective work consisting of an open linear drawing made up mostly of triangles painted on top of a four-part background: polygons that are black, pink, and blue-gray in color.



Installation view: *Downtown Painting*, Peter Freeman Gallery, New York, 2019. Photo: Nicholas Knight. Courtesy Peter Freeman, Inc.

*Art Observed*

February 10, 2018




---

**Home » New York – Zach Bruder at Magenta Plains Through February 11th, 2018**

« New York – Rita Ackerman and Carol Rama: “Body Issues” at Marlborough Contemporary Through February 10th, 2018

Aby Rosen Featuring Condos Geared Towards Art Collectors in New Development »

**NEW YORK – ZACH BRUDER AT MAGENTA PLAINS THROUGH FEBRUARY 11TH, 2018**

February 10th, 2018



Zach Bruder, *Edening On* (2017), courtesy Magenta Plains.

There is little doubt that [Zach Bruder](#) is seriously invested in space; both the tangible area delimited by the stretcher and the real and imagined places rendered on the canvas are of utmost importance to the Cleveland-born painter. The eight works included in *Edening On*, Bruder's first solo exhibition at [Magenta Plains](#) in New York, flaunt the artist's ability to render different spatial dimensions, finding a humorous irony and cohesive unity in their discordance.

The eponymous painting, *Edening On* (2017), for instance, consists of layers that are at once related and estranged. A festive wreath of woven ferns strewn with Christian four-point stars frames a solemn, blue monochrome depiction of a fortified abbey, itself contained within a dark blue ellipse. The shared religious undertone bridges two otherwise diametrically opposed imageries—the joyous excess of the evangelical holidays and the restrained austerity of monastic life, with Bruder pointing to the hilarity of their coexistence on the picture plane. Far from cynical, however, his work is not about denouncing hypocrisies but rather centered on capturing everyday paradoxes.



Zach Bruder, *Fit For* (2017), courtesy Magenta Plains.

Nods to existing historicities and narratives abound in Bruder's work, and art history is not spared. In a small canvas titled *Fit For* (2017), the silhouette of a soft-looking, lounging creature is painted in linear strokes unarguably evocative of Van Gogh's dashed brushwork. The surface on which the animal rests, as well as the identical wall behind it, distinguishable only by a hint of a horizon line, bear the diamond pattern that recurred in Cezanne's still lifes and harlequins.



Zach Bruder, *Faux Pas II* (2017), courtesy Magenta Plains.

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. The large acrylic and Flashe on linen work "Faux Pas II" (2017) depicts an anthropomorphized fox extending a paw towards the trees towering above him, most likely illustrating Aesop's fable of "The



Fox and the Grapes.” Paradigmatic of Bruder’s sensitivity to language and subtle humor, a wordplay is hidden in the title—“faux” and “fox” are nearly homophones. A second reading is also possible: its masculine torso covered in rust-red fur and pointed ears, mouth, and nose suspiciously horn-like, the fox summons up the image of a demon such as the goat-headed Baphomet, bringing up another play on words: “faux,” “faust.” Bruder is revisiting this equivocal scene for the second time; the first work in the series, “Faux Pas I” (2017), features the same hybrid figure.



Zach Bruder, *Who Is Minding The Shop?* (2017), courtesy Magenta Plains.

Bruder has an intuitive sense of color, achieving deeply pigmented surfaces tempered by strategic pauses of negative space. A miniature demon, shamrock green, walks on a cornfield yellow ground, his pastel-hued cloud of smoke breaking up a background of muddled bordeaux in the heavily ironic canvas “Who Is Minding The Shop?” (2017). Much like the eclectic protagonists of his paintings, these unlikely chromatic decisions somehow work. In *Edening On*, Bruder seems to draw from every source, his appetite for new stories and characters never fully satisfied. By culling together these diverse narratives, he brings the viewer’s attention to the natural condition of reality, one made up of pieces from different puzzles.

— V. Di Liscia

**Related Links:**

Zach Bruder at Magenta Plains [[Exhibition Page](#)]

---

This entry was posted on Saturday, February 10th, 2018 at 11:06 am and is filed under [Art News](#), [Featured Post](#), [Show](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

## Modern Painters

April 2016

## NEW YORK

## Zach Bruder

*La MaMa Galleria // January 8–31*

THE SUBJECTS OF the paintings in Bruder's debut solo exhibition veer from ancient Egypt to contemporary evangelical Christian theology to Native American burial grounds. What brings these worlds together is a contemplation of American ideologies, made clear through the presence and placement of *AM Guesser*, 2015, a spare black-on-ocher rendering of a rattlesnake at the gallery's entrance. Inspired by Benjamin Franklin's pre-Declaration of Independence Don't Tread on Me flag, Bruder's use of the rattlesnake can be read as a response to the far right and its revival of the symbol or, alternatively, a progressive patriotism currently far from fashion and too idealistic for today. The title of the piece comes from An American Guesser, the pseudonymous byline Franklin used to sign his letter to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*—of which he was also the owner—arguing for the rattlesnake as the emblem of America.

The show hints at divisions in American society—not just young/old or poor/rich but also the myriad shifting allegiances that form and dissolve based on political and religious trends. But Bruder's work is also formally distinct, and if one were to view the show without prior knowledge of the artist, it's likely

that much of this semipolitical subject matter would go unnoticed. Few would realize that the imagery of *Ignoble Tradition* and *Flood Geology*, both 2015, was sourced from creationist propaganda, or that *Charity Starts at Home*, 2015, is a reconfigured depiction of the Random House logo.

In his *New York Times* review of the recent Whitney exhibition "Flatlands"—which brings together youngish painters who clearly share Bruder's context—Ken Johnson introduced the idea of a semiskilled painter. The term aptly describes Bruder, not because he compromises aesthetics for the sake of the sociological but because, as Johnson explains, these are artists who "draw on methods associated with commercial illustration and design in order to play with public signifiers and personal poetics." Largely influenced by Sigmar Polke, Bruder's personal poetics aren't quite as dark as the German Expressionists' or as fun as the Chicago Imagists', though he draws upon both in his practice.

Poetics, in fact, are secondary to Bruder's personal politics, and his "semiskilled" approach to the canvas allows him to play simultaneously with the conventions of the medium and with these politics. It's less



**Zach Bruder**  
*AM Guesser*, 2015.  
Acrylic and Flashe on  
linen, 36 x 36 in.

about taking a position than exploring the multiplicities, idiosyncrasies, and conflicting possibilities of the existing positions. Three depictions of owls, a selection from a larger series the artist started after seeing the recent Middle Kingdom exhibition at the Met—embody much that he is seeking in his work. Vaguely rather than specifically familiar, the animals stand as signs of wisdom, or perhaps harbingers of death. —Sara Roffino

Artsy

July 14, 2015



## 30 Emerging Artists to Watch This Summer

ARTSY EDITORIAL

JUL 14TH, 2015 4:02 AM

### Zach Bruder

B. 1984 IN CLEVELAND, OHIO. LIVES AND WORKS IN NEW YORK.

SUMMER EXHIBITION: "THERE IS NO FACT OF THE MATTER AS TO WHETHER OR NOT P" AT 247365, NEW YORK.



Zach Bruder  
*Wigwam*, 2015  
247365



Zach Bruder  
*Give You More Gold*, 2015  
247365

The New York art world is buzzing over Bruder, whose tondo paintings have skipped from Brooklyn to Queens to Chinatown, and are now the subject of one of the Lower East Side's best summer exhibitions, at 247365. Bruder's circular paintings, a shape meant to echo the magnifying glass he used to examine each work's subject—including a grinning peach and a bucolic, half-upside-down village—are both charming and surreal, and have already turned many a head.

## Artsy

June 28, 2016


[ARTISTS](#) [ARTWORKS](#) [SHOWS](#) [GALLERIES](#) [MUSEUMS](#) [FAIRS](#) [AUCTIONS](#) [MAGAZINE](#) [MORE](#)

## 15 New York Group Shows You Need to See This July

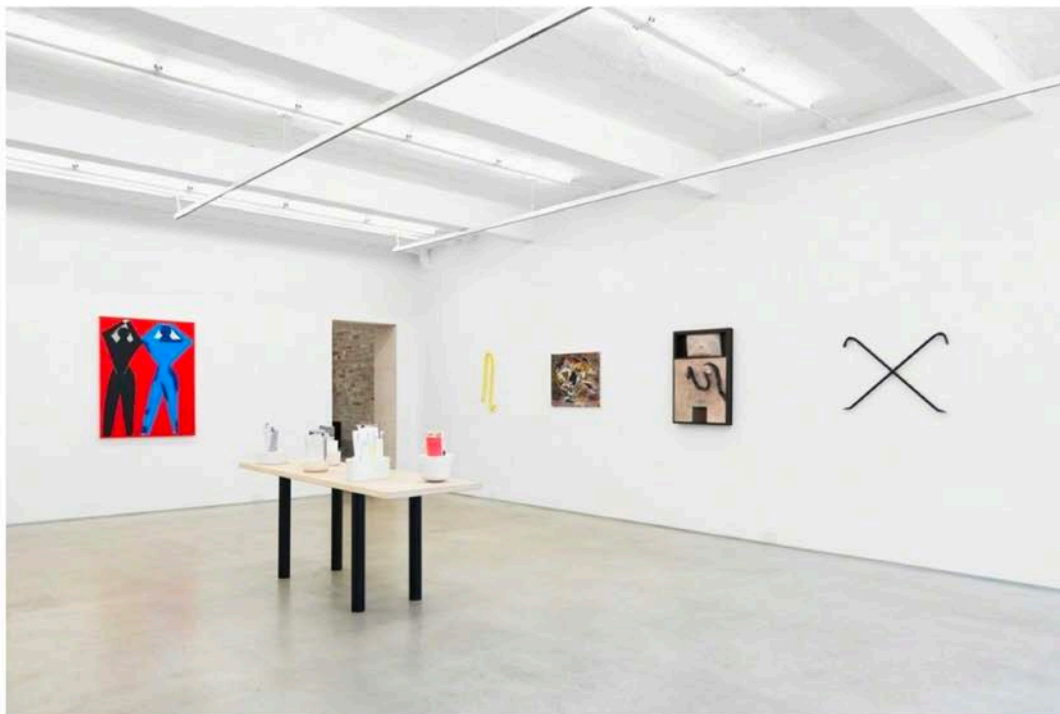
ARTSY EDITORIAL  
BY CASEY LESSER  
JUN 28TH, 2016 12:58 AM

While the summer months may signal a slowdown for much of the New York art world, it's the prime time to find thoughtfully curated group exhibitions in galleries across the city. This summer is no exception, with a strong, varied sampling—from exhibitions for finding fresh, lesser-known names, to an ambitious all-female show, to one blue-chip gallery's ode to its artist-employees. Find our 15 picks below.

"Record Lines This Summer" at Magenta Plains

JUN. 15–JUL. 27, 94 ALLEN STREET

[Dylan Bailey](#), [Marlous Borm](#), [Zach Bruder](#), [Dan Herschlein](#), [Denise Kupferschmidt](#), [Oren Pinhassi](#)



Installation view of "Record Lines This Summer" at Magenta Plains. Courtesy of Magenta Plains.

Artists in this show respond to the woes of air travel—namely, the vulnerable, potentially humiliating experience of passing through airport security. Curated by Ellie Rines, the works on view range from Herschlein's wall sculpture featuring hands clutching a belt to Denise Kupferschmidt's paintings of two people in familiar, full-body scan poses.

Blouin Artinfo

June 24, 2016

NEWSLETTER  ART PRICES GALLERY GUIDE BLOUIN NEWSBLOUINARTINFO INTERNATIONAL 

Q Search...

VISUAL ARTS

ARCHITECTURE &amp; DESIGN

PERFORMING ARTS

LIFESTYLE

CULTURE+TRAVEL

EVENTS

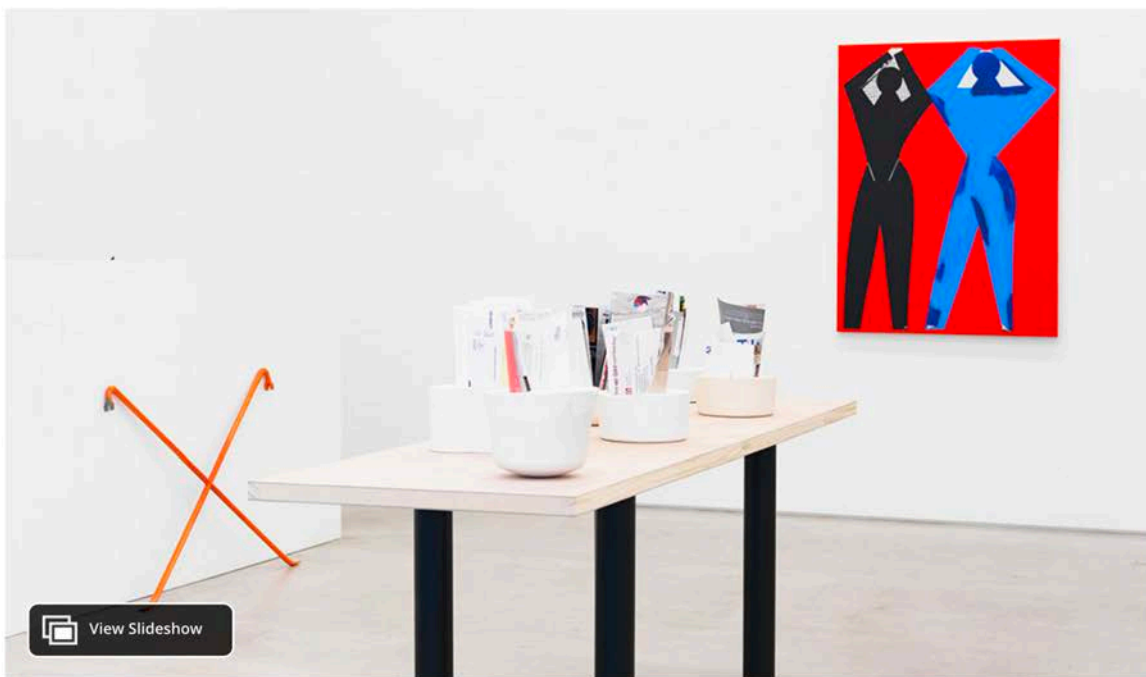
VIDEO

MORE

VISUAL ARTS / GALLERIES / ARTICLE

## 5 Can't Miss Gallery Shows in New York

BY SCOTT INDRISEK | JUNE 24, 2016



"Record Lines This Summer" at Magenta Plains (installation view)  
(Courtesy of Magenta Plains)

### RELATED

#### VENUES

Kansas

Marc Straus

#### ARTISTS

Cristina de Miguel

Rob McLeish

Nicole Eisenman

Holly Coulis

Sarah Crowner

### "Record Lines This Summer" at [Magenta Plains](#), through July 27 (94 Allen Street)

Starting with a flexible conceit — "the comicality and burden of air travel" — curator Ellie Rines brings together paintings, sculptures, and one absurdist text. Three canvases by Zach Bruder are stand-outs: a loping, dopey dog; some revelers at the shore; a man holding his shoe aloft (perhaps having successfully negotiated the gauntlet of airport security?). The show also serves up readymade sculptures, composed of colored crowbars (Marlous Borm) or plaster and junk mail (Dylan Bailey). My favorite, however, is Michael Feinstein's Xeroxed epistolary piece: a running correspondence between Feinstein (posing as David D. Newsom, trolling from "averyrealemailaddress@gmail.com") and an online scammer going by the name of Michael Moore. The result is an offbeat short story that — spoiler alert — ends with our hero standing in the Benin airport, desperate to make contact.

## The Creators Project

June 27, 2016

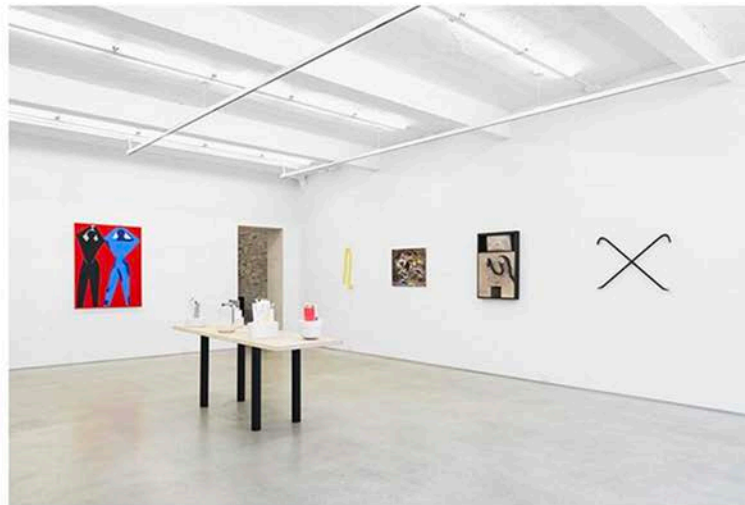
[YouTube](#)
[Twitter](#)
[Facebook](#)
[Tumblr](#)

### The Creators Project

[READ](#) | [WATCH](#) | [ABOUT](#)

## Air Travel Anxieties Get a Group Show

Andrew Nunes — Jun 27 2016



*Record Lines This Summer Exhibition View. All images courtesy of the artists and Magenta Plains.*

Whether artist, curator, or gallerist, working in the art world often demands nonstop travel. Between three Art Basels, two Frieze fairs, and a plethora of biennials and other events, it often feels like a neverending cycle of excursions. Everyone is constantly in-between trips, Airbnbs, and delayed flights.

Recently opened New York gallery Magenta Plains' ongoing exhibition, *Record Lines This Summer*, responds to the art world's obsessive relationship with travel. For the show, seven young artists have been brought together in an effort to tackle, "the physical experience of air travel"—specifically, "our feelings of confinement, vulnerability, and over-exposure" felt at airports, curator Ellie Rines tells The Creators Project. She adds that, "even though most of the art world is thought to be in Europe right now, I liked the idea of implying lines around the block to come in to Magenta Plains and see the show."



*Untitled, Oren Pinhassi*

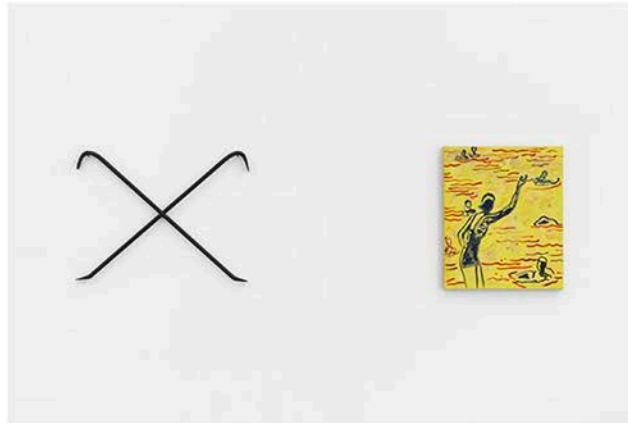
In and of themselves, the works in *Record Lines This Summer* do not necessarily scream "air travel," as there is little direct imagery or overt, undeniable correlations to the theme. With an awareness of the exhibition's unifying thread, however, the allusions to travel unravel themselves. Denise Kupferschmidt's *X-Ray* presents two painted, featureless figures with their hands raised to their heads as if undergoing full-body scans. *A Belt Near Dark* by Dan Herschlein is an abstracted relief of a person removing their own belt: an all-too-familiar circumstance experienced in the TSA line.



*X-Ray, Denise Kupferschmidt*

Other works connect to air travel in even more subtle and metaphorical ways. Dylan Bailey's sculptures of unopened mail encased in plaster are like tributes to the tight grip on reality that we attempt to escape through vacations. *Monument Around*, a painting by Zach Bruder, depicts a masked character holding a grim reaper-esque scythe and a radiant shoe while an hourglass trickles down—perhaps an allusion to the time we lose in airport rituals. Marlous Borm's series of modified crowbars are imposing, intimidating, and rigid, bringing to mind the dreaded, overbearing nature of the TSA yet again.

Whether you find the exhibition's link to air travel cohesive or just a background factor, *Record Lines This Summer* is, above all, a strong exposition of rising art world names that have just started partaking in the incessant travel rituals demanded by their careers. To them, we say, *Bon voyage*.



*Untitled, Marlous Borm & Make Emotion, Zach Bruder*



*Record Lines This Summer Exhibition View*



*Record Lines This Summer Exhibition View*

View the exhibition until July 27th at Magenta Plains in the Lower East Side.