Joanna Fateman, "At Thursday's Openings in New York, Our Critic Notices Contemporary Artist Art Paired with their Forebears," *Cultured,* November 11, 2026.

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THE CRITICS' TABLE ART IN BRIEF

At Thursday's Openings in New York, Our Critic Notices Contemporary Artists Are Paired with Their Forebears

Johanna Fateman reports on (among other things) a group of intergenerational exhibitions in New York, from "Hard Art" at MoMA PS1 to Jason Wee and Eikoh Hosoe at the Leslie-Lohman Museum.

By Johanna Fateman
November 11, 2026

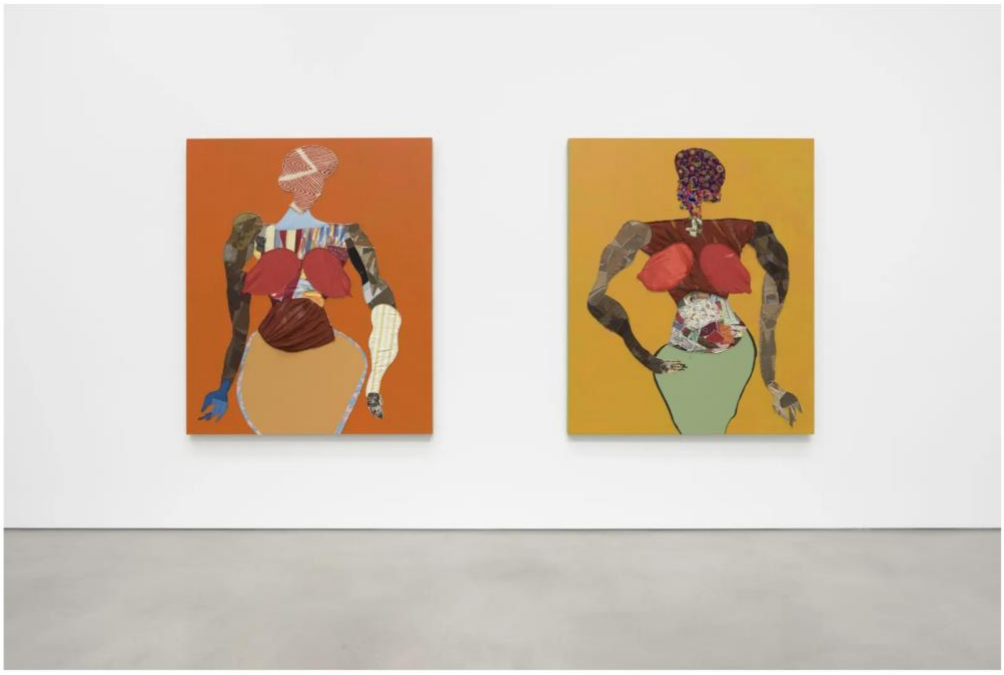


The crowd for Tschabalala Self's opening at Petzel on Nov. 5, 2026. Photography by the author.

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No offense to September, it was fun. I even added a couple of shows to the running for my end-of-year list. But November seems better, bringing with it a welcome seriousness. And Thursday's crop of openings—the handful I managed to get to—were, overall, more my thing: a mix of old and new, often side by side, sensitively curated, from institutional shows (at MoMA PS1 and the Leslie-Lohman Museum) to an unexpected pairing of artists by SoHo newcomer Pietro Alexander.

In Chelsea, two painters, the young Tschabalala Self and the late Robert H. Colescott, though at different galleries (Petzel and Gladstone, respectively), seemed to be in a passionate conversation about color and the figure—a connection I made not *only* because I saw their shows one after the other, dodging the neighborhood's opening-night crowds. No, I didn't stand on line for Yoshitomo Nara's Zwirner debut because, well, I guess I'm a terrible snob. But here's my take on what I did see.



Installation view of Tschabalala Self, "Tools of Worship," at Petzel Gallery, 2026. Photography by Lance Brewer. Image courtesy of the artist and Petzel.

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Tschabalala Self

Petzel | 520 West 25th Street
Through Jan. 30

I cabbed alone across town to Petzel for Tschabalala Self's packed opening, where the top margins of giant canvases were visible above the heads of the crowd. Not a departure from her previous subject matter, "Tools of Worship" (as her solo debut with the gallery is titled) extends the painter's themes and elaborates on the enclosed, mythic space occupied by her (usually) femme figures. They are posing bodies, maybe nude—it's hard to tell since their limbs, torsos, butts, etc. are either composed of, or clothed in, found textiles—situated in "empty" fields of color. In a few works here, buttery yellow backgrounds hug her patchwork figures with a gently exposing, even light. Though that wouldn't explain the contradictory directions of the shadows of *In Creation*, 2026, which features two beings.

Perhaps attuned by "Hard Art" to the rich history of Black artists using and reusing fabric, I was thinking beyond the realm of quilting with regard to her sewn-and-painted mixed-media works, to artists like David Hammons and Rodney McMillian, or to an artist like Suzanne Jackson who uses *everything*. And I was impressed, as always, with Self's ability to walk right up to the line of caricature with her exaggerated body parts (and wayward, pointing, or gesticulating breasts) to recast those brash features as indicators of undefined or undisclosed powers.

Color and texture are consummately, inseparably used, in unphotographable ways (I tried and failed to capture a detail I loved, where that butter-hued paint abuts burgundy velvet), and that ability was my great takeaway from the show—I felt almost drunk from it as I made my way around the block.

https://culturedmag.com/article/2026/11/11/art-hard-art-new-york-jason-wee/