

Martha Schwendener, "What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week," *The New York Times*, October 4, 2018.

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What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week

By Roberta Smith, Will Heinrich, Martha Schwendener and Jillian Steinhauer
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Charline von Heyl

Through Oct. 20. Petzel, 456 West 18th Street, Manhattan; 212-680-9467; petzel.com.



Charline von Heyl's painting "Hero Picnic" (2018). Credit Charline von Heyl, via Petzel, New York

Charline von Heyl's paintings function like discrete universes of ideas and markings — but her overall position is clear. When she was coming up as a painter in Germany in the 1980s, the reigning attitude was the conflicted-but-arrogant posturing of painters like Sigmar Polke or Martin Kippenberger. Yet Ms. von Heyl, who now lives in New York and Marfa, Tex., is all in. There are jokes in her work, but little irony. Historical styles and references commingle rather than compete for attention in "New Work," her ninth exhibition at Petzel.

Petzel

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Ms. von Heyl employs a range of techniques: Painterly marks are sprayed, drawn or stenciled. Abstract passages are disrupted by representational ones. Flat, jigsaw-puzzle and boomerang shapes recur. So do black and white stripes, rainy or batik-looking fields of diluted pigment and simple cartoonish objects: a telephone in "Dial P for Painting" (2017); a Pop-Cubist wine bottle and bowling pin in "Hero Picnic" (2018). Each piece displays a seeming clash of forms and colors that surprisingly cohere.

Some of the works here seem to argue for painting as a woman's domain — which it sort of is at the moment, since women increasingly dominate the field. "Lady Moth" (2017) has marbled arabesques stamped over a background of faint musical notation, while silhouettes of women march through the "Poetry Machine" series of canvases.

A traveling survey of Ms. Heyl's work will arrive at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C. in November, but her impact can be more immediate. Leaving the gallery, I saw a cargo van in the street, sprayed and layered with riotous graffiti and biomorphic shapes. It was as if Ms. von Heyl's aesthetic had leaked into the world, instead of the other way around. Her paintings have an instantaneous effect on your vision and perception. MARTHA SCHWENDENER

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