

What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week

Art in review, from Times critics. JUNE 30, 2016



Pam Glick's "Reclining," a work in oil and enamel on canvas at White Columns. Credit Pam Glick, White Columns, NY

Pam Glick, Annie Pearlman, Adrienne Rubenstein, Alyson Vega

By ROBERTA SMITH

The concurrent solo shows that White Columns routinely presents each month rarely lack synergy. But the latest set coheres like a single exhibition. The binding forces among the four artists are strong color, stylistic synthesis and engaging tensions among the legible, the abstract and the material, which is mostly paint.

The assertively offhand paintings of Pam Glick command the large center space with rough-and-tumble combinations of oil and enamel, sometimes on tarp or wood. Paint is applied in broad, coarse strokes, while expanses of parallel lines and small curves are spray-painted. The layered, crisscrossing infrastructures can resemble reworked signs from construction sites. But high Modernism, graffiti, cartography and early American painted furniture are also conjured.

With reds, blues and white hinting at messed-up American flags, these works seem like beautiful castoffs, relics of better times, which adds gravity to their improvisational flair. A work from 2015 is weaker than the others, made this year. Ms. Glick, who is in her 50s and has not had a solo show in New York in over 20 years, seems to be in her prime.

The other three artists whose smaller shows orbit around Ms. Glick's have their own fusions. Annie Pearlman's quirky little paintings suggest a torqued urban Precisionism crossed with early Cubist landscape. Office buildings loom over city streets, twist together or merge with interiors. Trees brandish jagged branches. There may be some figures, and some streetlights. The palette of oranges, browns, occasional hot pinks and a deep blued green, like the space within the paintings, are implicitly overheated and contemporary.

Adrienne Rubenstein is an Expressionist revivalist whose paintings seem attentive to Kandinsky and self-taught art. She works fast and intuitively, tossing up sketchy vegetables, automobiles and flowers or just brush strokes. The better ones have fewer colors. The mostly green "Family Crest" and especially the magenta and green "Broccoli Tree House" indicate a bright future.

Alyson Vega taught math for 22 years, until roughly a decade ago. Then a brain tumor and subsequent surgery supplanted her mathematical bent with an urgent need to make things, turning her into a self-taught artist. In small, densely worked hybrids of quilting, embroidery and appliqué that sometimes involve feathers or paint, she depicts people, buildings, a vertiginous stairwell and round moonlike faces floating above trains or caravans.

A few works are strung to wire frames. "Wired #3" might be a tiny quilt whose constituent pieces have rebelled, dissolving into a chaotic mass of fabric chips. What holds them together is unclear, which has a magical effect.

White Columns

320 West 13th Street, West Village

Through July 16