



Art

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“Palette”

Greenberg Van Doren, through Fri 18

This thoughtful group show has a deceptively simple premise—color—and it opens with a bang. Naomi Fischer’s spectacularly garish portraits in Day-Glo pink and yellow are installed on a bright turquoise wall at the entrance. It’s no revelation that Fischer’s toxic palette signals her abject subject matter, nor that Benjamin Butler’s gorgeous, geometric landscapes, two of which are installed around the corner, owe much of their appeal to the artist’s considerable gifts as a colorist.

Thankfully, Augusto Arbizo, who organized the exhibition, has subtler points to make, too. The inclusion of Chris Caccamise’s cartoony, polychrome sculptures suggests that humor may be triggered as much by hue as by language. Similarly, in this context, it is the restricted palette of Andreas Leikauf’s snapshot-like paintings of people and public places that establishes their noirish mood.

Other works evoke a similarly shadowy side of chromatics. Andrea Hanak’s intriguingly ephemeral paintings of flowers obscure human figures, which in turn are nearly swallowed by their black backgrounds; a stunning sleepwalker by Martin McMurray materializes from a dark swirl. Laleh Khorramian’s abstract series of murky paintings at first look like nothing more than uninspired abstractions of rock formations, but close inspection reveals myriad details of pattern and figuration semi-obscured by golds and aquamarines. Arbizo’s show, which starts as a wild ride, slows down here—and encourages viewers to do the same.

— Merrily Kerr