

NEW YORK — “PAINTING: NOW AND FOREVER, PART III”
AT MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY AND GREENE NAFTALI
THROUGH AUGUST 17, 2018

July 30th, 2018



Leidy Churchman, *Paradise 8 & 9* (2018), via Matthew Marks

Following past iterations in 1998 and 2008 iterations, *Painting: Now and Forever, Part III* occupies the gallery spaces of [Matthew Marks Gallery](#) and [Greene Naftali](#) spread across Chelsea. Spanning five spaces in total, the ambitious checklist includes an impressive roster of over forty artists. While loosely grouping the show around style and visual vocabulary in each space, the exhibition more broadly tackles the stylistic and thematic concerns contemporary painting—mostly figurative—over the past decade.



Nicole Eisenman, *Luck Lines* (2018), via Greene Naftali

This decennial affair, initiated the late Pat Hearn and Matthew Marks himself in 1998, aims to look at the trajectory painting has pursued until the present. Over its iterations, the definition of the present has shifted with decades, initially signifying the aftermath of the 1980s' much trumpeted "return of painting" Downtown with names such as [Ashley Bickerton](#), [Carroll Dunham](#), and [Sue Williams](#). "This show feels open-ended, an impression furthered by the suggestion of a *Part II* somewhere off in the future," wrote Roberta Smith at the time in her *New York Times* review of the first iteration, and she had a point. A decade later came *Part II*, which aimed to have its finger on the pulse of where painting had reached during the aughts. Now under the curation of Carole Greene and Marks, the show boasted an updated artist list, with the exception of lone holdover [Mary Heilmann](#), that included [Katharina Fritsch](#), [Richard Hawkins](#), [Laura Owens](#), and [Wade Guyton](#).

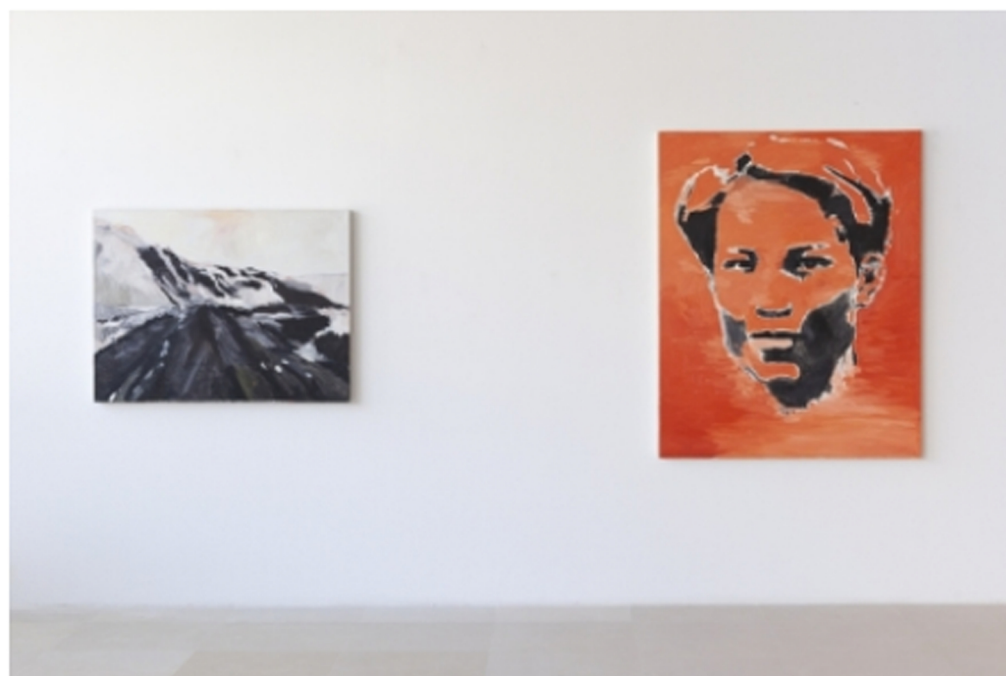


Allan D'Arcangelo, *Without Sound Two* (2018), via Greene Naftali



Painting, Now and Forever Part III (Installation View), via Matthew Marks

Now comes *Part III*, another show of updated perspectives and new ideas on view across the spaces. Leading the charge at Marks's 22nd Street Location is [Leidy Churchman](#), whose intimately dark and personally crafted oil on linens not only question the reasons one paints, but also asks for contemplation in the face of challenging notions of subjectivity. The gallery also exhibits India's pioneer queer painter [Bhupen Khakhar](#), whose dream-like painting of a seashore conveys male intimacy, in addition to series of paintings by [Noah Davis](#), [Karl Wirsum](#), and [Linda Stark](#). It's an interesting note to observe crossover between the gallery's own artists, its previous curatorial exercises, and outliers, a notion that seems to welcome the individual's perspective in parsing out the state of modern painting, even as the show looks beyond its perspectives for more conceptual ground.



Painting, Now and Forever Part III (Installation View), via Greene Naftali



Helen Marten, *Animal Hours* (2018), via Greene Naftali



Karl Wirsum, *Toot Toot Tutu Toodle-oo* (2013), via Matthew Marks

On 26th Street, [Greene Naftali](#) demonstrates a more playful approach welcoming a bit more of the zeitgeist into its examination of painting, with works by [Nicole Eisenman](#), [Helen Marten](#), [Gedi Sibony](#), and [Rachel Harrison](#). Amongst the scene-stealers here are [Jeannette Mundt's](#) paintings of gold medal winner American Olympic gymnasts, Rodney [McMillian's](#) sensual latex-oozing bed sheet sculptures, and [Mathieu Malouf's](#) eerie portraits of anonymous dystopian figures. By contrast with the show at Matthew Marks, one could note a distinctly more expansive vision of the painted form, often twisting in and out of flat planes with a sense of formal inventiveness that seems to both ask how painting itself has changed, and just where it might move including into three-dimensions, and perhaps beyond. One will have to wait until 2028 to see just how successful this move might be.

Painting: Now and Forever, Part III is on view at Matthew Marks Gallery and Greene Naftali through August 17, 2018.

— O.C. Yerebakan