

# ARTFORUM

## NEWS



Carolyn Eidner, from the series: "Particularities of Gravity Demands," 2017.  
December 07, 2017 at 3:28pm

## CAROLIN EIDNER WINS 2017 MIAMI BEACH NADA ARTADIA AWARD

Artadia and the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA) announced today that Carolyn Eidner is the recipient of the 2017 Miami Beach NADA Artadia Award, a \$5,000 unrestricted, merit-based award granted to one contemporary artist exhibiting at the fair. Eidner is the first European artist to win the prize.

Eidner's work is exhibited at Natalie Hug (booth 7.15) at NADA Miami, which opened Thursday, December 7, and runs through December 10. The artist was selected by a jury of Jose Carlos Diaz, the chief curator of the Andy Warhol Museum, and Andria Hickey, a senior curator at MOCA Cleveland.

"It is always exciting to see the work of artists who are little known in the United States," Hickey said. "Carolyn Eidner's concrete paintings shown as a solo booth at Nathalie Hug are fantastic and represent only a fraction of her multifaceted practice which has primarily been shown in Europe."

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27 Apr 2018

SHOWTIME

## Carolyn Eidner's Plaster Paintings Channel Our Digital Anxieties

“To a certain extent plaster contains an ambivalence. On one hand it is a very democratic material, entirely open for any kind of use, but it has a very monumental appearance.” The German artist investigates the instability of truth in her show at Aurel Scheibler during Gallery Weekend Berlin. Words by Rosalind Duguid



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Carolyn Eidner's work appears, at first, almost like marshmallow, almost like stone. Her laborious technique of pigmenting plaster that is then attached to board results in objects that sit somewhere between painting and sculpture, scrawled with casual notes or faintly diagrammatic imagery. Eidner has exhibited worldwide and last year received the Miami Beach NADA Artadia Award for her work on show at Nathalie Hug's booth. Her new show at Aurel Scheibler attempts to rethink ideas of freedom and "truth".

**You have a new show on at Aurel Scheibler gallery titled *Vanishing Blue in Pursue of Red in Black*. Could you tell me a little about it, and the ideas behind the title?**

It seems that in the future, perhaps very soon, many new dimensions will enter our conventional lives which will redefine what a human being is; our potential, our very sense of self. In this show, the idea of a blue sky as a romantic symbol of ultimate freedom is replaced by the darkness of infinity, the cosmos and quantum space. I have one piece in the show where an organic red line squeezes through the black territory, like a moment of irrational passion: Eros touches the enigmatic darkness which surrounds us. The exhibition title reflects this vanishing old concept of a blue sky in order to become a red tiny line; intensely pursuing the unknown instead of attempting to make it digestibly "known". That's why I love to use (to destabilize, to deconstruct) images that reflect typical cultural signifiers of classical thinking, like a wave, a mountain or a proud animal.

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Quantum Foam and Its Outcome, 2018  
 Untitled (Remnants of Glory), 2018

**Scrawled text appears throughout this new work. Are these notes, or quotes, from particular source material?**

I see the text pieces like micro-poems or haikus. When I draw a sketch for the geometric plaster plates, the words are like spontaneous insights. The appearance of the words in this form is as important as the sound they evoke in our heads.

**Your “paintings” are very often made from pigmented plaster, appearing almost like frescoes. What drew you to this material?**

The initial idea for this technique originated from the wish to overcome the classical

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entirely open for any kind of use, but it has a very monumental appearance, like stone, if you allow it to.

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Untitled 2019

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laborious to a nearly absurd level, as I have to plan every little detail in advance and put a lot of physical effort and time into the realization. Sometimes one single piece takes a month or two. Anyway, it is an organic material and has its own life, so sometimes there are unexpected happenings that I integrate into the process.

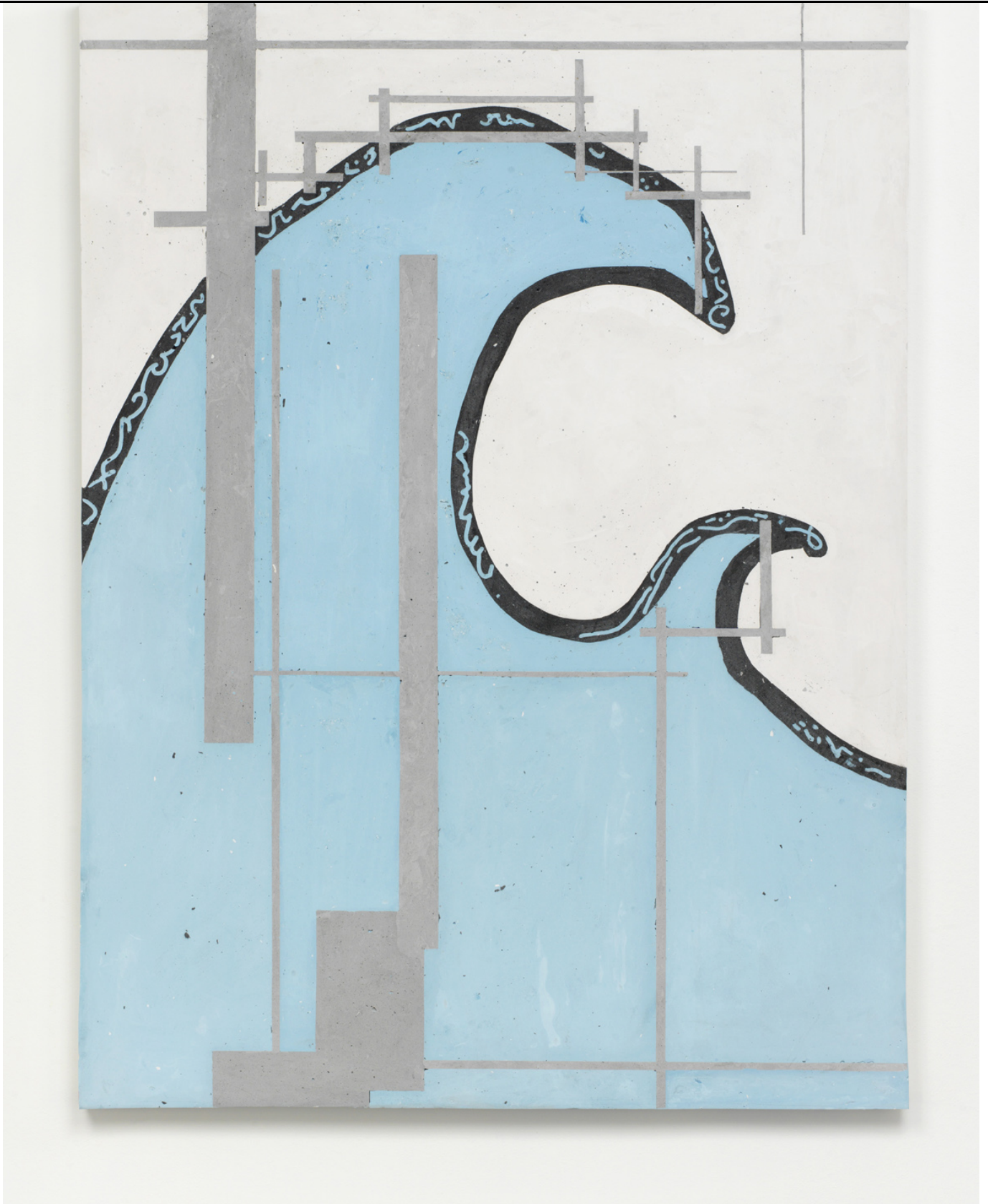
**How far, if at all, does philosophical or scientific theory influence your practice?**

Everything happens in our heads. Reality (personal and daily life, art, scientific and philosophical ideas etc) seems like a play with unexpected processes, events and effects. The freedom allowed by absurdity is crucial for us to be able to have intellectual reflections and a fulfilling sensual experience.

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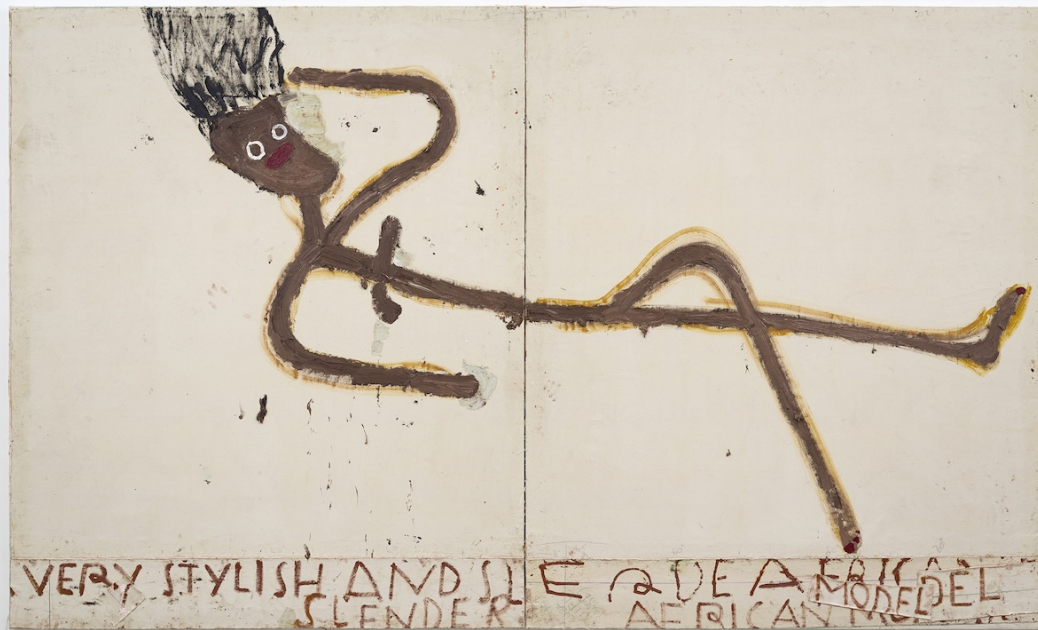
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Art & Photography

## Five Female Painters Breathing New Life into the Medium

Get to know the women artists changing the face of painting as we know it.

*4 April, 2018*



Rose Wylie, "Tube Girl", 2016, Oil on canvas in two (2) parts, 205 x 341 cm. Image: Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner, London. Copyright Rose Wylie.

From the languorous nudes of Matisse and Picasso to the virtuoso painterly performances of de Kooning and Pollock, the medium of painting has long been regarded as an expression of masculine bravado. In his famous essay on abstract expressionism, "The American Action Painters", Harold Rosenberg describes the canvas as "an arena in

**SLEEK**



which to act". He compares the abstract expressionist painter - who, throughout his essay, is spoken of in terms of a universal "he" - as "taking to the white expanse of the canvas as Melville's Ishmael took to the sea". For Rosenberg, the American action painters were fearless vanguards, who heroically confronted the canvas with their deep inner malaise. And make no mistake about it - these were "mens' men". For this reason, painting as a medium has frequently been rejected by women, people of colour and those who do not fit the archetype of the "great male artist" as implied by Rosenberg. In the present era, painting - particularly abstract and expressionist styles - is eschewed by many artists on account of its stale roots in the white male "genius" tropes of yesteryear. In that case, it is always interesting when artists try to overcome this art historical impasse, seeking a way in which to counter painting's suffocating association with machismo and re-imagine the medium. After all, contrary to what art history would have us believe, painting is so much more than an expression of heterosexual male desire or macho bluster; it can also be playful, frangible, liminal and subversive. Artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Frida Kahlo and Helen Frankenthaler proved that painting was not just a boys club, but that women painters could push the medium in whole new directions, even surpassing their male counterparts in formal inventiveness. With that in mind, we take a look at five contemporary artists with current or upcoming exhibitions, who are turning the tide in terms of what painting can be.

Carolyn Eidner



**SLEEK**

Left: Carolin Eidner, "Quantum Foam and Its Outcome", 2018, Pigmentierter Gips auf Styropor / pigmented plaster, mounted on styrofoam, Right: "I am the girl who belongs to stars", 2016, pigmented plaster, mounted on styrofoam. Images: Copyright Carolin Eidner, Courtesy Aurel Scheibler, Berlin (on consignment from Natlia Hug)

In December Carolin Eidner received the 2017 Miami Beach NADA Artadia Award, which is given annually to an innovative contemporary artist – and it's easy to see why. On first instance, her work - which predominantly takes the form of plaster blocks pigmented in pleasing sorbet shades and then mounted on styrofoam - is playful and good-humoured due to its quirky use of form and colour. However, Eidner's work cuts through the seriousness of painting as a so-called site of self-expression. Instead, Eidner's "paintings" (and somehow quotation marks suitably describe their status as both painting and otherwise) depict kooky figures and shapes that blatantly reject the grandiose expressive and representative tendencies of painting as we know it. Eidner, who is a former student of Rosemarie Trockel, takes a refreshing absurdist approach to the painting process.

Carolin Eidner: Vanishing Blue in Pursue of Red and Black *runs through to May 5 at Aurel Scheibler, Berlin*

Karla Black



Left: Karla Black, "Unlike", 2018, Glass, wood, clay, paint, Vaseline, lipstick foundation, moisturising gel, 139 x 96 x 32 cm. Right: Karla Black, "The Rest Impressed", 2018, glass, **SLEEK**

COLOGNE

**Carolyn Eidner**

NATALIA HUG

*Verticality as the Speed of Horizon* (all works cited, 2014) is the title of one of the pieces in Carolyn Eidner's debut gallery show, "Meanwhile 'Me'." The artist has only just finished her studies at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where Rosemarie Trockel was among her teachers, and, like the title of the exhibition, *Verticality as the Speed of Horizon* seems to be a kind of programmatic statement. Not necessarily on the level of content, though—what might verticality as the speed of horizon mean? How could verticality be any such thing when it is the opposite of horizontality? And how we to imagine a speed of the horizon, which is usually distinguished by its static quality?



View of "Carolyn Eidner," 2014.  
From left: *Ignorance towards What Really Is*, 2014; *Verticality as the Speed of Horizon*, 2014; *Twilight Demand*, 2014.

That's just it: It's not the title's perceived meaning but rather the particular approach manifested by it that sets the artist's work apart. Eidner is one of a generation of what we might call post-post-Conceptual artists who use language in associative fashion, prefer material structures and objects over explicit content, and flout ideology in favor of ambivalence that is immensely refreshing. To see how this works, consider the piece *Verticality as the Speed of Horizon* designates. An almost translucent cream-colored bar of soap with numbers engraved in it is mounted directly on the gallery's wall in an upright position. Its counterpart, also set upright but a little higher up, is a block ordinary black modeling clay. Forming a "picture," the two are framed by simple wooden slats—not even of uniform width—mounted on the wall with almost demonstrative casualness. Taken together with this form and materials, the title positively invites wide-ranging associations.

Physical appearance on the one hand, the Conceptual aspect on the other, and how the two inform each other: These are Eidner's great concerns, as may be observed in her paintings no less than in her sculptures. She slathered several layers of white plaster on canvas to make a picture—actually, more like an object—that exudes the muteness and fragility of death mask. Then she painted a luminous abstract watercolor on the unevenly structured surface. The result is *Rudimental Grammar of Poiesis* (*Maniac Casals*), another clash between physical matter and a prevailing Conceptualism. Again, pay attention to the title. People have associated all sorts of things with the Greek term *poiesis*—including lots of wrong things. In contradistinction to *praxis*, which describes a free activity that is an end itself, *poiesis* designates a doing, such as the craftsman's, in which a product is intended and which can be learned. Hence the title's reference to grammar as a system of rules that the language learner needs to study. And yet a language is not necessarily a means of production, is it? Perhaps of the production of meaning, which, as the title suggests, proceeds maniacally. And what does *Casals* mean? Although it may remind you of a famous cellist, to the artist it meant nothing: She simply made it up. The term lends the whole thing an ambivalence that attests to her subtle sense of humor and even subtler flair for the paradoxical.

—Noemi Smolik  
Translated from German by Gerrit Jackson