***Charline Von Heyl***

Von Heyl is a New-York based German artist that is one of today's leading and most inventive painters that continues to expand and reassess the possibilities of painting. I chose her as my artist to focus on because of her visceral paintings that focus on composition, beauty, and narrative. She creates images that are recognizable yet impossible to clarify, leading to this ambiguous feeling. [[1]](#footnote-1) Combining keen humor, a rigorous, process-based practice, and references to a broad array of sources, including literature, pop-culture, metaphysics, and personal histories, Von Heyl creates paintings that are neither figurative nor abstract, but instead present, in her own words, “a new image stands for itself as fact,” they are “non-representational” paintings challenging conventions about an artist’s signature style or linear development. [[2]](#footnote-2)

Von Heyl’s style of painting is very different, as she creates an ‘anti-style’ and an ‘excess’. She takes ‘decorative forms’, symbols and signs without direct references, to the extreme in her works. Semiotics is a crucial component within her work through the use of objects and illustrative style. Her art focuses on improvisation, risk, discovery, as well as special tricks surprising twists, and feelings of elevation- leaving the field of “expression” behind her. She pursues approaches inspired by Surrealism, ranging from doodles and quick sketches to forms that seem to burst apart in the room. Her work provokes contemporary imagery and details continuously flow into her abstract, gestural shapes. They drift sensually in the current of time and simultaneously capture diverse impressions- creaturely, loud, quiet things; quotations; luxurious contemporary colors that are familiar to us. [[3]](#footnote-3)

I have visited Petzel Gallery, who have accompanied and supported her work and executed an exhibition in Manhattan. I was drawn to two of her works, Lady Moth 2018, and Mana Hatta 2018. Both paintings are made of layers with marks, shapes, and colors that pass through. The visuality of Mana Hatta is a head that is skull as well as a machine to convey the ultimate destruction of the high-rise New Tower of Babel by oppressed workers. The main idea is central to the construction of social life; it is a vision of social structure and captures the feel of frenzy and luxury, the anticipation of destruction. This idea creates a scopic regime in which oppressed and exploited workers are ruled by entrepreneur overload. By the way she loosely outlined the shape of the skull with machinery in the center to construes the idea of manufacture and labor, which she had succeeded through her visuals. The idea that she has used human skulls and rabbit figures to represent humanity is used as the objective correlates, where us humans, mainly laborers, are taken for granted as having certain qualities, also known as, exploitation. We are represented as fast, hard working, and even over worked. The figures can be the objective correlate of strength, energy, and almost portrays the idea of a sprint in a marathon, we are not going on a steady pace that’s sustainable, were going too fast that its going to crash.

Von Heyl uses these techniques in her works to “leave a hole in the mind, a longing” [[4]](#footnote-4). She does this through semiology by incorporating studiums, visuals, objective correlates, polysemy and other methods. This prolonged observation becomes a place where thoughts and feelings come into presence.

**Bibliography**

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1. Dirk Luckow et al., *Charline Von Heyl - Snake Eyes: Deichtorhallen Hamburg, 22. Juni-23. September 2018* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Clayton Press, "Charline Von Heyl, New Work At Petzel Gallery, New York," Forbes, September 14, 2018,  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dirk Luckow et al., *Charline Von Heyl - Snake Eyes: Deichtorhallen Hamburg, 22. Juni-23. September 2018* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Clayton Press, "Charline Von Heyl, New Work At Petzel Gallery, New York," Forbes, September 14, 2018,  [↑](#footnote-ref-4)