



# THE NEW YORKER

Culture Desk

## Five Female Painters to See in New York Art Galleries

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The first week of September brings an anxious back-to-school energy to the galleries of New York City, heightened, in recent years, by the concurrence of Fashion Week. On Thursday night, art lovers and clothes horses flowed together on the streets of West Chelsea like brackish water. (Which pack is fresh and which one is salty remains up for debate.)

If we're being honest, openings are for schmoozing, not for looking at art, but a critic can form first impressions. For one thing, female painters are out in full force. East of the madding crowd (near the plant district), Judith Eisler, a native New Yorker, is having her first show in a decade at the Casey Kaplan gallery. Eisler, who now lives in Vienna, has been working since the nineties with one strict rule: she paints stills from movies captured on her computer (back in the day, she used a VCR), putting an art-house twist on the cerebral photo-realism of Gerhard Richter. In the past, her paintings have felt somewhat constrained, a little too cool. But her new subject, Derek Jarman's "Caravaggio," has inspired the most beautiful work of her career—painting about painting that is as lush as a hothouse bloom.

The gallery Cheim & Read, which is closing its public space to pursue private dealing, devotes its penultimate show to the great post-Ab-Ex painter Joan Mitchell, who died in 1992. It's a swan song that also flips the art world the bird: recently, Mitchell's estate decamped to the almighty Zwirner. Neighbors in the same building, D. C. Moore and P.P.O.W., are showing the veterans **Barbara Takenaga** and Julie Heffernan, respectively. Takenaga is an abstractionist with a mystic's interest in how the ecstatic can emerge from the laborious.