

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Sherie' Franssen

Tempest

September 7–30, 2017

Dolby Chadwick Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by the painter Sherie' Franssen, on view September 7 to 30. Franssen works in an abstract style that features bold, vivid colors and voluptuous, animated strokes. Without resorting to naturalism, her dynamic compositions skillfully evoke recession into space and include elements that suggest the contours of the body.

The paintings in this show exhibit a newfound looseness and sensuality, as if Franssen's gestures have realized an innate trajectory of soft curves and sweeping turns. This painterly unfettering parallels Franssen's desire for the works to be cinematic, to provoke a sense of urgency—even darkness—but at the same time to be intimate. Playing with light and dark helps her achieve this emotional register.

In *Red Tempest* (2016–17), for instance, shadows are caught deep in the composition's recesses, occasionally breaking free and zipping across the predominately red, almost technicolor surface in a bid for freedom. They are counterpoised, however, by bright, often white marks that act as a foil and shift the drama by adding nuance and complexity. Here, we feel the tug between inner and outer, between build-up and resolution, and between shadow—an inevitable part of life—and light. This and other works offer a solid statement about how the artist feels, and about what it means to feel, even if we cannot always completely account for those feelings.

As a result of Franssen's interest in poetry, the cinematic unfolding that takes place in her paintings is rhythmic, as if embodying the metrical patterns of her favored poets, including Emily Dickinson, D. H. Lawrence, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. *Neither Out Far Nor in Deep* (2017), for example, is named after a Robert Frost poem that uses the infinite, hypnotic sea to comment on mankind's tendency to fixate upon the unknowable and the distant. Franssen, however, does not create one-to-one relationships between poems and her paintings. Instead, here we feel what could be described as the swelling of the tides, and we find ourselves scanning the composition, searching for something that cannot necessarily be found: an answer, a resolution, a lynchpin.

Throughout her career, Franssen has also mined the history of art as a source of inspiration. Among the artists she cites are Northern and Italian Renaissance masters, particularly the ways they use color and contrast, portray emotions, and comport the body. While this reference might be initially surprising, given her decidedly modernist aesthetic, it speaks to her interest in the human condition and the depth and sensitivity upon which the paintings are predicated.

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Sherie' Franssen was born in Torrance, California, in 1952. In 1999, she earned her BFA in Drawing and Painting from California State University, Long Beach. Her work has been exhibited in museum and gallery shows across the country, including in HEADS, a 2011 exhibition curated by Peter Selz. Franssen has been reviewed in the San Francisco Chronicle, Los Angeles Times, and Art Ltd. This will be Franssen's sixth solo show at the Dolby Chadwick Gallery.