

# Reopened Galleries Offer Not To Be Missed Solo Shows

JULY 31, 2020 | PAUL LASTER

## Alice Tippit: Pallid Carrier

Patron, Chicago

June 27 – August 29, 2020

A mid-career, Chicago-based artist who's been gaining traction internationally over the past five years for her graphic depictions of figurative subjects as silhouetted, flatly-colored forms, Alice Tippit makes her Patron gallery debut with eleven new, small-scale oil paintings and watercolors that whimsically transform human body parts and everyday objects into ambiguous signs and symbols.

The paintings *Brood*, *Wife*, and *Share* erotically capture the female figure in monochromatic shapes that convey multiple meanings. Likewise, the three-colored canvases *Delete* and *Glance* imbue still life objects with stylish facial forms. Continuing with the visual riddles, *Dry* graphically twists a red-tipped finger into a solar eclipse and *Stuck* wedges the monochromatic brown field of the painting into its simulated brick wall, while also hinting at the depiction of buttocks and breasts.

Tippit's watercolors on paper differ somewhat from the oils in show in that they include words and letters that turn them into puns. *Spoke* presents the letter O in the middle of a pink, O-shaped body growing out of a kneeling leg and *Beat* offers a pair of red lips puckered like a throbbing heart with the words "nurse" and "curse" floating above and below in a seemingly reversible form. Elusive in meaning, Tippit's playful art makes you ponder what it is that you are observing when you are precisely in the middle of the act of seeing.

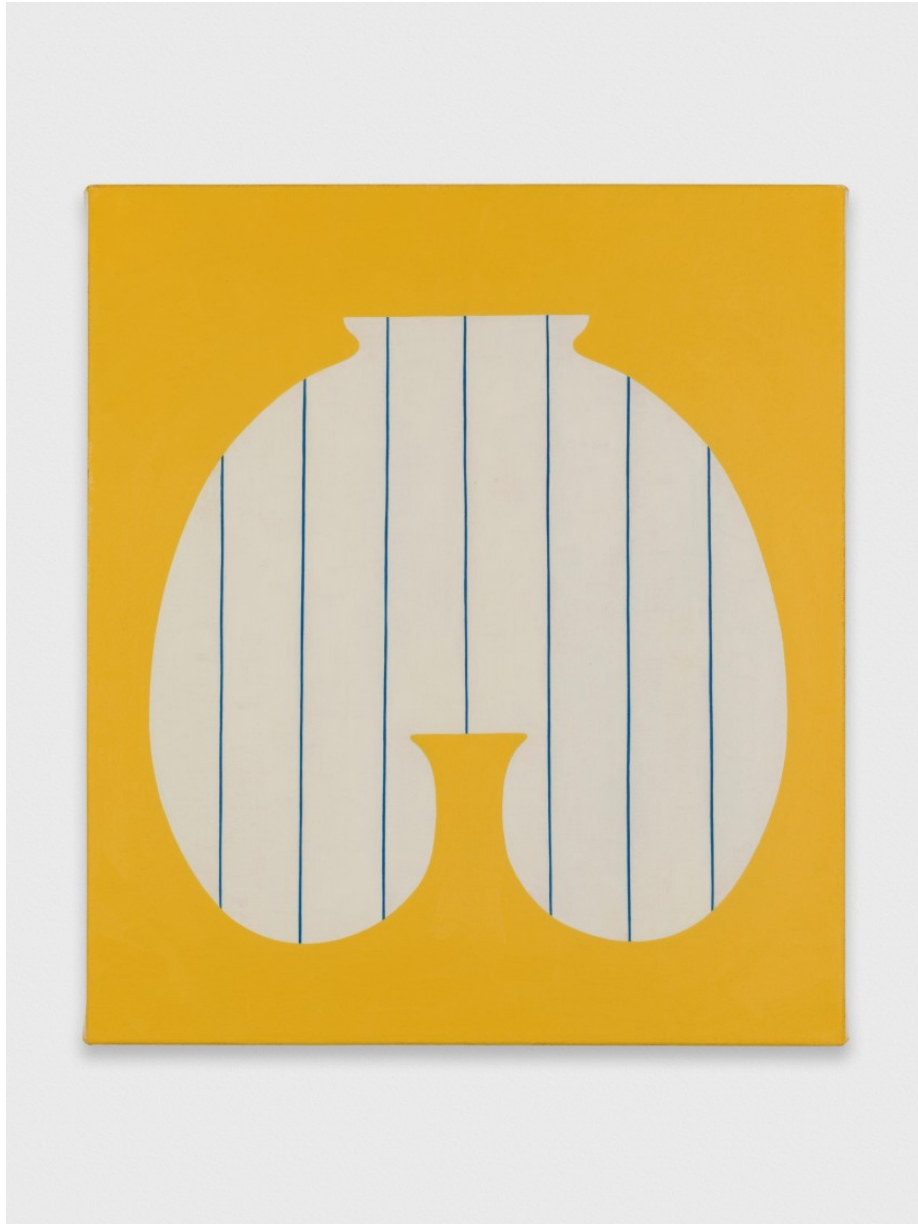


Alice Tippit, *Dry*, 2020.

# Los Angeles Times

Inspired by Emily Dickinson, Alice Tippet's paintings play out as visual poetry

DAVID PAGEL | JAN. 3, 2020



"Peer" by Alice Tippet, 2019. Oil on canvas, 16 inches by 14 inches.  
(Alice Tippet / Grice Bench)

# Los Angeles Times

Set aside the buzzy new Apple TV+ series on Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) and consider for a moment how her poetry has inspired two terrific art exhibitions in the last four months.

A September group show at Bel Ami gallery titled “The Props Assist the House” captured the magic of Dickinson’s concise lines. Now Alice Tippit’s “Still Life With Volcano” at the L.A. gallery Grice Bench zeros in on the tension — sometimes sexual — that gives Dickinson’s poetry its kick: the physical sense that it traffics in mysteries older than time yet up to the minute.

Pictorially, Tippit’s 17 oils on canvas are no more complex than flashcards — and not much bigger than a tablet screen. Each features a few stylized shapes set against a single-color ground. Many resemble the silhouettes of body parts — legs, breasts, crotches, hands, lips. Others are even more abstract, composed of straight and curved lines that form taut rectangles, elongated triangles and swooping curves, some graceful, others plump, even chubby.

Tippit applies paint sparingly, using just enough to get the job done and not wasting a brushstroke. Nearly all of her canvases are painted with only three colors. White, tan, peach and pink predominate. But other hues provide all sorts of surprises. Making off-white exciting, ordinary gray sensuous and taupe downright sexy, Tippit is a colorist who understands understatement.

Her seven pencil drawings are similarly minimal — and wickedly efficient. Composed around a single letter, a single word or a single phrase, each turns communication inside out. The logic of language gets tied in knots. Meaning mutates. Messages migrate. Interpretations multiply. In short, poetry happens.

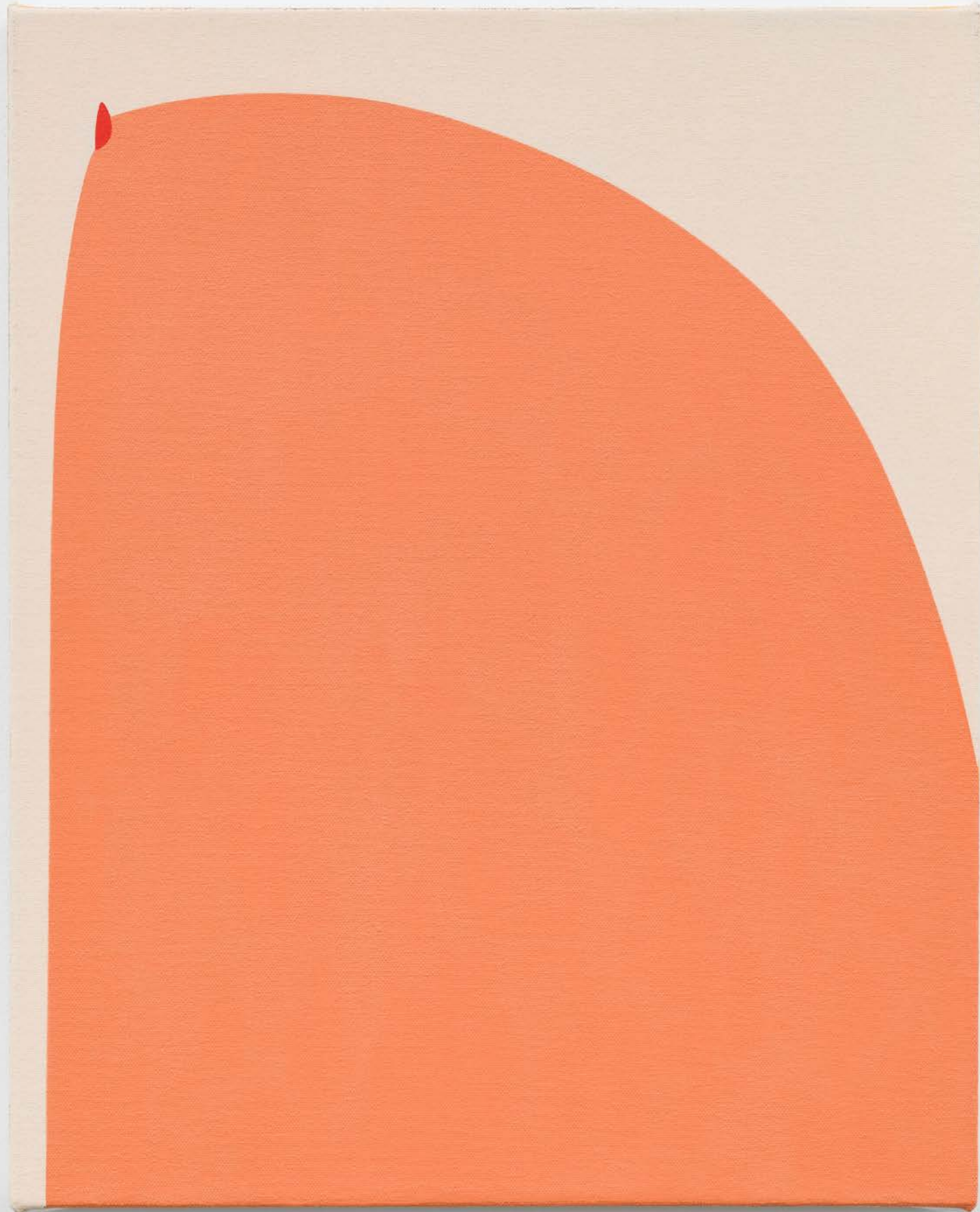
The ambiguity of Tippit’s stenciled drawings expands and intensifies in her canvases. In “Follow,” “Mine,” “Sheer” and “Loose,” background and foreground flip-flop. In “Peer,” “Cinch” and “Toll,” the picture-plane seems to wrap around the figurative element, snuggling up yet leaving it free to slip away. “Enter,” “Sold” and “Skirt” are abstract compositions intruded upon by figurative elements. The seemingly flat expanses of “Bell,” “Dress” and “Lune” turn into infinitely deep spaces only to snap back. The ensuing tug of war — between what you think you see and what’s really there — invites double takes, second thoughts, second looks.

Throughout the exhibition, confusion breeds pleasure. Kitty Brophy’s electrifying images of women come to mind, as do John Wesley’s deliciously painted pictures of cartoon-inspired mischief. But Dickinson is the guiding light behind “Still Life With Volcano,” illuminating the silent poetry of Tippit’s slippery imagery.

Winter Edition, Issue 16, 2020

**ART  
MAZE  
Mag**





[www.alicetippit.com](http://www.alicetippit.com)

# “Stripped down and made strange”: Towards an ambiguous visual language in the semiotics of Alice Tippet's graphic paintings

Chicago-based artist Alice Tippet creates bold paintings that translate familiar forms into a visual language of stark shapes, symbols and colours, their meanings manifold, unstable and often evasive. Alice studied painting and drawing both as an undergraduate and as a graduate at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, receiving the school's George and Ann Siegel Fellowship for her MFA. Her works have been exhibited in both the United States and internationally in Berlin and Malmö.

Previously in her artistic practice, Alice drew on the imagery and tropes of genre painting and familiar historical artworks to produce paintings that toyed with form and meaning to complicate or hinder the interpretation of the viewer. Her earlier work on recasting the symbols and elements in traditional paintings and convoluting their significations still feeds into her current practice. The forms in Alice's paintings hover somewhere between the familiar and the obscure. Recognisable objects and images—a pair of lips, an apple, an eye, hair, a banana, a moon, various limbs and silhouetted faces seen in profile—are stripped of any discernible context or transparency of meaning. On the starkly coloured ground of Alice's canvas, these forms become shapes that teeter on the edge of abstraction, interacting with one another to produce relations of meaning that verge on German Surrealist Max Ernst's definition of the surreal as “a linking of two realities that by all appearances have nothing to link them, in a setting that by all appearances does not fit them”.

Although Alice is influenced by such works as the enigmatic paintings by Belgian Surrealist artist René Magritte, her graphic eye and stark palette make for a form of Surrealism that is wholly her own. For Alice, colour is a device by which to distort relationships between forms and between the different layers that make up the painting. Combined with her use of flat, clear-cut shapes, Alice's stark hues of light and dark produce a visual system of signification in which every element of the painting works towards, or against, a multitude of possible interpretations. Her tendency towards two-dimensionality is offset in some works by touches of detail—tiny, intricate lines or areas of shading that model the swell of flesh, the curve of a lip—that make unexpected gestures towards depth which contribute to the subtle layering of perspectives present in the paintings.

This incorporation of images and colours as signs, a device shared by graphic design, works towards a visual language that, in Alice's work, defies a single, clear reading. Her sustained interest in the relationship between text and image merges with her own painterly impulse to reduce and manipulate visual information so that her paintings divert and splinter understanding. Drawing much on the capacity of writing to produce multiple semantic implications by means of poetic devices such as metaphor, Alice ultimately creates images that stand as oblique references rather than as clearly stated, unambiguous definitions.

Alice's practice today relies on “thinking, researching and making”—sitting with an idea before manifesting it as a work, then sitting with a work before forming linguistic associations to produce titles and supplementary text. She tells us here about the distinctive visual style of her paintings, the affinity she feels with poets and writers who probe and distort systems of language, and her wish for her works to exist in a state of precariousness when it comes to their capacity for communicating meaning.

interview by Rebecca Irvin

Featured image:

Alice Tippet  
*Lick*  
oil on canvas  
16 x 13 inches

AMM: Hi Alice, have you always considered yourself a painter?

AT: I've been making paintings—oil on canvas—since 2007. Before that, I was more of a work-on-paper artist: printmaking, drawing, watercolour. Though I make paintings, I've never thought of myself as strictly a painter. To be honest, I don't enjoy it all that much, painting. I like thinking about them and I like finishing them. The making part is just something that I have to do in order for it to be a painting. So I prefer the distance between myself and the painting process that is implied when I say that I make paintings instead of saying I am a painter.

AMM: How has the distinctive style of your paintings developed? Did your studies have a big impact on this?

AT: The look of my paintings grew out of an earlier interest in combining text and image. In that work, I began to opt for a clean, bold appearance, counteracted by a corresponding lack of clarity as to a clear meaning. At the same time I was also making paintings that relied heavily on genres of painting and one's knowledge of a particular work. For example, removing all of the signs of greatness in Jacques-Louis David's Napoleon Crossing the Alps: depicting Napoleon from behind and scaled down to miniature, on a flat plain instead of in the mountains. Somewhere between these two projects, I arrived at what I do now in painting. My love of wordplay lives on in titles and works on paper, while the paintings became more graphic in appearance. And while a knowledge of painting genres is helpful, in general they no longer rely on a specific, familiar image from art history. That process though, of breaking apart the signifiers of an image and manipulating them, is one I still use today. I put my own images through that wringer.

AMM: Despite the bold nature of your works, your palette appears fairly reserved—the colours are rarely garish or loud but rather stark and subtle. Can you tell us about more about this aesthetic choice?

AT: Aesthetics aren't so much a factor; colour for me is more of a tool for delineating form. In any given painting I choose two to five colours for the image. Before making the painting I will think about potential interpretations for the image and how colour might sway it in one or another direction. If there is a recognisable form, do I want to use the most common colour association, or will the use of a different colour complicate the perception in a more interesting way? I use contrast to unsettle figure-ground relationships, and darks often stand in for deep space in an otherwise flat image. I admit though that I have a personal preference for warmer colours and so I end up reaching for them more often. I've definitely made lurid colour selections in my work, but unless deployed sparingly I find that those images lose something in the clarity of appearance mentioned previously. Sometimes though, this might be a desirable direction for the image, so I try to remain open to it.

AMM: In turn, your stark colour palette evokes a certain balance between your subject and the space

around it, subverting the traditional hierarchy of background and foreground in painting. When making a work, how do you think about the relationship between negative and positive space, between background and subject?

AT: I often use the contrast between complementary colours or light and dark colours to produce an unstable figure-ground relationship. This opens up the image and heightens the potential for the image to have multiple interpretations.

AMM: Your forms are very clear-cut—how much are you influenced by graphic design?

AT: The appearance and operations of graphic design are of great interest to me. The difference

*“I am definitely taking advantage of pareidolia, which is our tendency—given even a limited amount of information—to see the figure and faces in objects. This tendency is very powerful, so I reduce the referential information, as I do with almost everything really, to allow other interpretations of the forms to coexist. For me, when the body is referenced, I want it to resist simple admiration and instead pose a question, if that makes sense.”*

– Alice Tippet

being that graphic design usually communicates something specific whereas I prefer more ambiguity.

AMM: How does your work negotiate between abstraction and representation, and between two-dimensionality and three-dimensionality?

AT: Well really it's the viewer who negotiates the space between abstraction and representation, the paintings don't do anything on their own,

right? And I also negotiate that gap when I am developing an image. By using flat shapes without volume, colour to unsettle figure-ground relations, and shifts in scale, I can create an image that shuttles between the two even when there are recognisable forms. Rarely are they one or the other. Sometimes I decide that an image requires more detail for a representational element, or shading to give depth or volume, but this is relatively rare. I do it when it feels right. It's a different thing to do and it can feel more meaningful than it is because I don't do it very often. Usually I only do it when the specificity it adds complicates the reading of the image.

AMM: Do you ever work in other mediums than painting, and if not would you like to?

AT: I try to do what feels right for a particular idea, so yes, I'm always open to other mediums. Drawing is really important to my practice, but more as a means of developing ideas. I still work on paper, in a variety of mediums: collage, watercolour, coloured pencil, and I still do printmaking sometimes. I've included found objects and photographs in shows. All very two-dimensional though! I don't think in the third dimension very well, and even when I do it's still very related to drawing or painting.

AMM: When it comes to the technical undertaking of making an image, what is your process like? Is it painstaking work to create such stark lines?

AT: Once I'm ready to make a particular painting, I usually finish it in one day. If a form is symmetrical I'll often cut a stencil to get it onto the canvas, or if it is a form I've used multiple times I usually have a stencil made. I start in the morning, get the surface ready, mix my colours, and then I could be at work for only a few hours or all day if the forms are more complicated. I work from the edges outwards, with no masking or tape. I want a unified surface with edges that meet, not layers. It's not easy but my paintings are small, so it's manageable.

AMM: The shapes and figures in your work seem to function almost like symbols or signs. Can you expand on the kind of visual language your work seeks to deploy?

AT: Many of my forms reference painting genres such as still life or portraiture, but stripped down and made strange. My interest lies in creating something that has a kind of familiarity and seems legible, so the visual language and bold appearance of graphic design is also something for me to think about when composing an image.

AMM: I notice that there is often an anatomical, bodily element to your works, where limbs, faces, mouths, hands, eyes become almost isolated, flattened shapes. Can you tell us more about the presence of the body in your images?

AT: I am definitely taking advantage of pareidolia, which is our tendency—given even a limited amount of information—to see the figure and faces in objects. This tendency is very powerful, so I reduce the referential







Featured image (p.18):

Alice Tippet  
*Verse*  
oil on canvas  
19 x 16 inches

Featured image (p.17):

Alice Tippet  
*Follow*  
oil on canvas  
24 x 18 inches

information, as I do with almost everything really, to allow other interpretations of the forms to coexist. For me, when the body is referenced, I want it to resist simple admiration and instead pose a question, if that makes sense. Most of my figures are assumed to be female, perhaps because the female body is overrepresented in painting or because I am a woman, ergo I paint female bodies. But there are many that are not coded in one way or another, and some are most probably male. More than anything, what you are seeing is my interest in the literary blazon, which is a poetic device that catalogues the physical attributes of a subject, typically a female one, using comparisons to natural phenomena or rare and beautiful objects. Metaphor is deeply important to my work.

*AMM: How does the language of your paintings change when viewed in the flesh, in an exhibition for example? Are things like scale and the arrangement of the works important?*

AT: I take as much interest in the layout of an exhibition as I do in creating individual works. I often think of it in relationship to writing. I usually have one work that I think of as central and then I build the story of the exhibition around it. While each work has its own individual set of associations, these can be compounded by its proximity to others. I do this primarily by thinking about difference, so I would never place works together if the associations are too similar. It's better to use a formal kinship, a visual rhyme or echo within the works first, then I assess where it takes me and whether I like the relationship or not. Scale is certainly part of this—my largest works are usually no bigger than 30 x 24 inches; my smallest size is usually 13 x 10 inches. Within this range I have quite a few sizes. The difference in size can seem quite meaningful when arranging works for exhibition, especially so if there is an unexpected use of scale within the image.

*AMM: What dialogue are you aiming to conduct with the viewer? Is there anything in particular that you are seeking to convey, an impression you wish to create, a feeling or atmosphere you hope to induce?*

AT: If there is anything I want to convey it is that the systems we use for communication are less stable than we assume them to be. This to me is exciting—things don't have to be one way—but for others this is a threatening state. I'm not interested in nonsense, which is too easy to create. I will usually try to set a tone in an exhibition, either through writing about it, including text based works, or found objects. This will set folks off, but I'm always surprised as to where they take it.

*AMM: Does your work draw on other disciplines such as literature or are you more closely focused on language as a system, rather than as narrative or meaning?*

AT: A little rule that I have for myself is that nothing in particular should be happening in my images. No story is being told there. That said, I am very interested in poetry and some

writers who are not poets but whose practice I feel a kinship with in terms of their approach to language. I like the system of language but I'm interested in the cracks rather than the structure. And I do think a lot about poetic operations such as rhyme, repetition, and metaphor, particularly when creating an image or putting together an exhibition.

*AMM: As language is such an integral element within your work, how do you go about selecting titles for individual pieces and for shows?*

AT: I keep a list of words that I find interesting in the back of each of my sketchbooks. I like homophones—words that share their sound but not their meaning—and words with connotative meanings. When it comes down to titling it might happen quite easily in that I think of the title as I develop the work, or more deliberately. Most of the time I have to sit with a particular work and think about the associations it brings, then think about words related to those associations, then think about words that rhyme with or have a similar combination of letters to those words, and I'll look at my lists for inspiration. It's a ruminative process. A title should never tell anything in particular about a work, because a work should never be about any one thing, at least in my practice.

*AMM: Is there a particular artist or artwork that has had a great influence on your own work?*

AT: Magritte is a huge influence, a giant among many, many others. His works have a mysterious affect that is well worth analysing. One of my favourite paintings is of a loaf of French bread sitting next to a window, through which the evening sky and landscape is visible. The title is L'Avenir (The Future). His titles are really great. They extend the meaning of the work rather than explain. And this work is so funny and pregnant with meaning, though that can also be said about his work in general. The phallic shape of the bread, the opening of the window... what does it mean? Maybe it only goes in one direction but I don't really care to answer that question, I just want to rest with it at that moment.

*AMM: What pursuits do you currently have beyond painting?*

AT: Not much gets between me and my studio time but I've always been a reader, though a lack of time means I don't finish books as quickly as I used to. I take ceramics classes, though I am pretty terrible at it. I've also been teaching myself German for some time, though again, I am terrible at it.

*AMM: What is your studio environment like? Do you like to keep things neat or do you allow it to become more chaotic?*

AT: Somewhere in between I guess. I don't think well in disorderly spaces but neatness is also stifling. I'm a tidy-piles-of-stuff person. My floor is clear but my work table is not. My easel is filthy.

*“If there is anything I want to convey it is that the systems we use for communication are less stable than we assume them to be. This to me is exciting—things don’t have to be one way—but for others this is a threatening state. I’m not interested in nonsense, which is too easy to create. I will usually try to set a tone in an exhibition, either through writing about it, including text based works, or found objects. This will set folks off, but I’m always surprised as to where they take it.”*

- Alice Tippet

*AMM: Do you consider yourself part of a wider artistic community, either where you work in Chicago or further afield? Do you ever collaborate on shows or works?*

AT: Yes. Though I am not super social in the Chicago art community I am a part of it, and social media helps me to feel connected to the community beyond my physical one. I've collaborated on works only once that I can think of, with Dawn Cerny, a truly fantastic artist from Seattle with whom I have an unusual synergy. These days I'm more likely to collaborate on shows than works but it has been a little while since one of these has been realised. The last one was with Alex Chitty in 2013 at Roots & Culture here in Chicago.

*AMM: In what ways do you see your work developing?*

AT: I don't think too intensely about how my work might develop, I just continue thinking, researching, and making, and trust that I will be able to see where it needs to go when the time comes.



Alice Tippet  
*ESS ENVY*  
 Installation view  
 Nicelle Beauchene Gallery



Alice Tippet  
*Woman on Yellow Motorcycle in Crystal Lake*  
 Installation View  
 Kimmerich Galerie





Alice Tippet  
*Mass*  
 oil on canvas  
 13 x 10 inches



Alice Tippet  
*Short*  
 oil on canvas  
 20 x 16 inches



Alice Tippet  
*Idle*  
oil on canvas  
18 x 14 inches



Alice Tippet  
*Monitor*  
oil on canvas  
16 x 13 inches

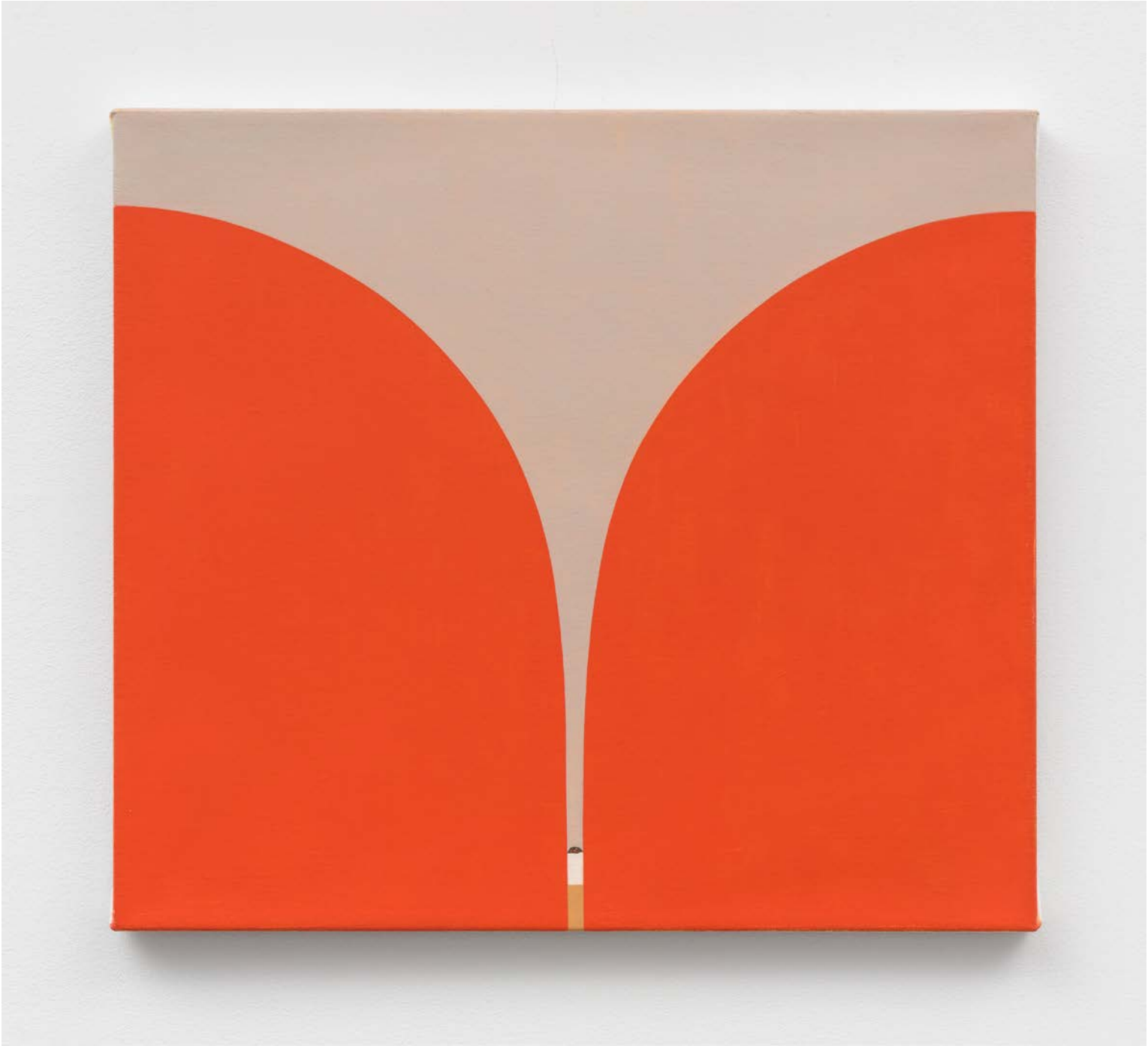


Alice Tippet  
*Skirt*  
 oil on canvas  
 22 x 18 inches



Alice Tippet  
*Bell*  
 oil on canvas  
 13 x 10 inches





Alice Tippet  
*Sink*  
 oil on canvas  
 20 x 18 inches



Alice Tippet  
*Sore*  
 oil on canvas  
 13 x 10 inches



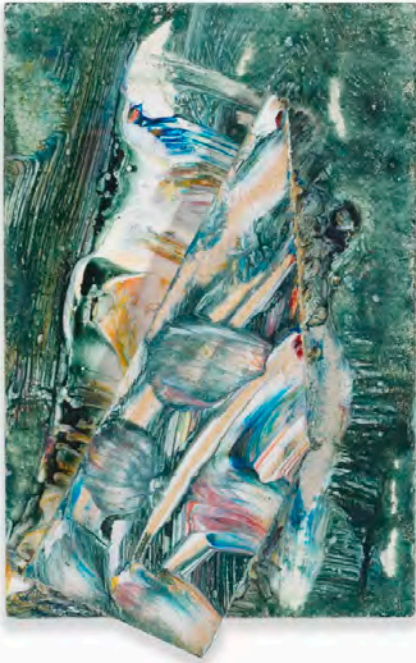
Alice Tippet  
*Toll*  
 oil on canvas  
 16 x 13 inches



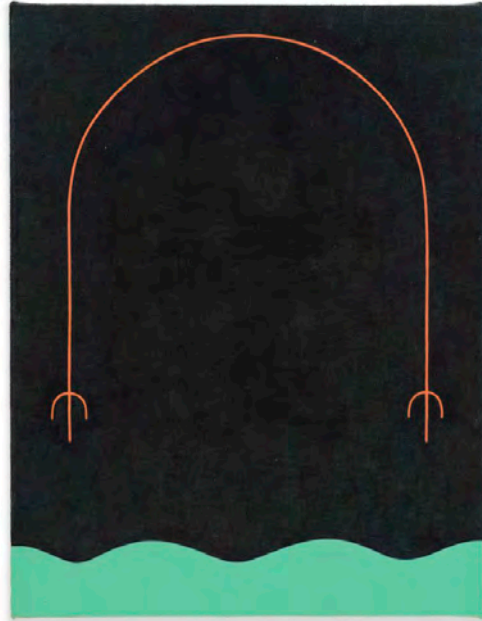
Alice Tippet  
*Loose*  
 oil on canvas  
 19 x 16 inches

## Bigger Isn't Always Better A Review of 'Small Painting' at Corbett vs. Dempsey

July 22, 2019 at 11:06 pm by [Chris Miller](#)



Louise Fishman, "Untitled," 2014.  
Oil on board, 3 3/16 x 2 inches.



Alice Tippit, "Mere," 2019.  
Oil on canvas 13 x 10 inches.

As art galleries do during the summer months, Corbett vs. Dempsey is showcasing their roster of artists in a group exhibition. But this show is far from typical. In an art world where size is proportional to value, the gallery has dared to go small. Twelve inches is the norm, allowing contrasting paintings to co-exist on the same wall, and fifty pieces to fit into the same room.

Edie Fake contributes one of his typical architectural fantasies. When done on a larger scale, the symmetrical rows of rainbow-colored dots can feel oppressive. But at fourteen inches high, his 2019 work feels enjoyably precise, mysterious and alluring. Similarly, the small 1987 monochrome by Christopher Wool has far more charm and far less despair than his wall-sized work shown at the Art Institute of Chicago in 2014. In contrast, Charline Von Heyl's abstract expression feels uncomfortably crammed into its limited space. There is barely a hint of the explosive power found in her larger work.



Von Heyl and Wool are represented by the gallery, but Fake, like more than half of the thirty-three artists on display, is not. Some artists come from northern Europe or Canada, many live or show in New York. Kristy Luck and Alice Tippit graduated this decade from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Tippit characterizes most of the art on display in her statement: "Ambiguity of meaning in an image that otherwise indicates it can be easily understood poses a question for the viewer."

Corbett vs. Dempsey is certainly not the only local gallery to show visual puzzles, but they seem to be a leading proponent. A high level of execution suggests a strong sense of purpose, but attempts to discover that purpose have been calculated to fail. Visual appeal entices viewing, but not enough to confirm that visual pleasure was itself the purpose.

Even when a piece front-and-centers a recognizable object, the question of intention is unavoidable. Why did Ryosuke Kumakura paint that damp, wrinkled handkerchief? It's hardly as compelling as the wrinkled surfaces rendered, for example, in the work of Claudio Bravo. Why did Helene Appel paint a single pasta shell? Isolated against an unpainted canvas, it has no connection to food, ambience or even a formal abstract dynamic.

There's nothing puzzling about Jimmy Wright's tiny self-portrait from 1987. It feels at least as personal, troubled and edgy as those by Van Gogh. But Daniel Richter's expressionist self image is accompanied by a second painting and a puzzle regarding attribution. Daniel and his son David are credited as collaborating on the two works. Both paintings are loosely drawn representations, but in one, the paint has been skillfully applied with a sharp eye for design. The other feels like it was thrown together by a twelve-year-old. You guess who did what.

It's too bad that the show included no miniature landscapes. Plein air painting is often done small enough to be finished in just a few hours. The only landscapes that do appear are tiny paintings-within-a-painting by Ann Toebe as she depicts the living space of a "Republican donor." Presumably, only troglodytes and philistines appreciate that kind of art, reminding us yet again that this gallery targets a sophisticated elite.

An enjoyable surprise are six mini-masterpieces of abstract expression that measure between two and four inches. Created by the octogenarian Louise Fishman, they feel heroic, even if they could only cover the wall of a doll house. They offer an ever-timely alternative to outsized masculine ambition.

The exhibit serves well as an introduction not only to this gallery, but also to the kind of contemporary art that strikes a cool, distant stance of bemusement rather than a passionate engagement with humanity's adventure on the planet. And so it summons more respect than enthusiasm. (Chris Miller)

ARTADIA  
NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
501(c)(3)  
EST 1999

For Immediate Release

June 21, 2019

**ARTADIA ANNOUNCES FIVE FINALISTS FOR THE 2019 CHICAGO AWARDS**



**NEW YORK, NY** - Artadia is pleased to announce the five Finalists for the 2019 Chicago Awards: **Bethany Collins, Assaf Evron, Brendan Fernandes, Caroline Kent, and Alice Tippit**. The Finalists will receive studio visits with second-round jurors, who will ultimately select two artists as Awardees to receive \$10,000 in unrestricted funds. The Finalists were selected by jurors **Ylinka Barotto**, Assistant Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, New York; **Ian Berry**, Dayton Director of The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY; **Grace Deveney**, Assistant Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

Of this year's Finalists and the selection process, Barotto noted: "I am always impressed by the tireless, unrelenting work of Artadia as one of the leading organizations in sustaining and bringing to the fore impressive works by contemporary artists across the country. The submissions to the 2019 Chicago award all impressed me with their compelling quality reflected in a broad array of practices. The work of the group of finalists is prescient, innovative, and engaging. Furthermore, each of the finalists in their unique way raises intriguing and pressing questions through a considerate investigation of mediums."

Deveney felt similarly of this year's selection; "There were so many incredible artists under consideration and the range of submissions reflects Chicago's wonderful art networks and communities. The finalists stood out based on the clarity of their visions and their intriguing approaches to material and form."

This is Artadia's tenth Award cycle in Chicago. Artadia received more than 500 applications for the Awards, which were open to all visual artists living in Chicago for over two years, working in any media, and at any

For more information please contact: Jonathan Gardenhire, [jonathan@artadia.org](mailto:jonathan@artadia.org)

**ARTADIA  
NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
501(c)(3)  
EST 1999**

stage of their career. Finalists and Artadia Award recipients are selected through Artadia's rigorous, two-tier jury review process. In the first round of review, jurors evaluated the merit of all submissions and collaboratively determined the five Finalists.

Artadia is a national non-profit organization that supports artists with unrestricted, merit-based Awards followed by a lifetime of program opportunities. Artadia is unique in that it allows any artist to apply, engages nationally recognized artists and curators to review work, and culminates in direct grants. Since 1999, Artadia has awarded over \$5 million to more than 330 artists in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco.

The 2018 Chicago Artadia Awards are generously supported by Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, the artist LeRoy Neiman and Janet Byrne Neiman Foundation, Inc., individual donors across the country, Chicago Council members, and Artadia's Board of Directors.

### **Bethany Collins**

Bethany Collins (American, b. 1984) is a multidisciplinary artist whose conceptually driven work is fueled by a critical exploration of how race and language interact. Collins is interested in the unnerving possibility of multiple meanings, dual perceptions, and limitlessness in the seemingly binary. Collins' practice (drawing, printmaking, sculpture & performance) allows her to define and redefine her own racial landscape. As Holland Cotter noted writing in *The New York Times*, "language itself, viewed as intrinsically racialized, is Bethany Collins' primary material."

Bethany has had solo exhibitions at the Center for Book Arts, New York; Locust Projects, Miami; Birmingham Museum of Art; and Atlanta Contemporary Art Center; among others. Her work has been shown in group exhibitions at the DePaul Art Museum, Chicago; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; the Studio Museum in Harlem; the Drawing Center, New York; and the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, East Lansing; as well as other venues. She has been the recipient of an NEA award, a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, and the Hudgens Prize. Collins has been recognized as an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem, the MacDowell Colony, the Bemis Center, and the Hyde Park Art Center, among others.

### **Assaf Evron**

Assaf Evron is an artist and a photographer based in Chicago. His work investigates the nature of vision and the ways in which it reflects in socially constructed structures, where he applies photographic thinking in various two and three-dimensional media. Looking at moments along the histories of modernism Evron questions the construction of individual and collective identities, immigration (of people, ideas, images) and the representations of democracy.

His work has been exhibited in galleries and museums internationally. Evron holds an MA from The Cohn Institute as well as an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), where he currently teaches. In 2019 he exhibited a special project at the Mies van der Rohe-designed McCormick House at Elmhurst Art Museum in Illinois, as a debut for a series of photographic interventions in Mies van der

For more information please contact: Jonathan Gardenhire, [jonathan@artadia.org](mailto:jonathan@artadia.org)



**ARTADIA  
NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
501(c)(3)  
EST 1999**

Rohe's architecture. In Fall 2019 he will have his first US museum solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

### **Brendan Fernandes**

Brendan Fernandes (b. 1979, Nairobi, Kenya) is an internationally recognized Canadian artist working at the intersection of dance and visual arts. Currently based out of Chicago, Brendan's projects address issues of race, queer culture, migration, protest and other forms of collective movement. Always looking to create new spaces and new forms of agency, Brendan's projects take on hybrid forms: part Ballet, part queer dance hall, part political protest... always rooted in collaboration and fostering solidarity. Brendan is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program (2007) and a recipient of a Robert Rauschenberg Fellowship (2014). In 2010, he was shortlisted for the Sobey Art Award and is currently the recipient of a 2017 Canada Council New Chapter grant. His projects have shown at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York); the Museum of Modern Art (New York); The Getty Museum (Los Angeles); the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa); MAC (Montreal); among a great many others. He is currently artist-in-residence and faculty at Northwestern University and represented by Monique Meloche Gallery in Chicago. Upcoming projects in 2019 include performances and solo presentations at the Solomon R. Guggenheim (New York); The Whitney Biennial (New York); the Smithsonian Museum of American Art (Washington); the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago); and the Noguchi Museum (New York).

### **Caroline Kent**

Caroline Kent, born in Sterling, Illinois is a Chicago based artist who earned her MFA from the University of Minnesota in 2008. Her work has been exhibited nationally at The Flag Art Foundation, NY, The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, The Depaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL, and The Union for Contemporary Art, Omaha, NE. She is the recipient of awards from the Pollock Krasner Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, and the McKnight Foundation.

### **Alice Trippit**

Alice Trippit (b. 1975) makes paintings that address her interest in the creation of language and the application of meaning. Her work has been exhibited at venues in the United States and abroad, including Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, Kimmerich, mumok, Anton Kern Gallery, Grice Bench, and Adams and Ollman, among others.

For more information please contact: Jonathan Gardenhire, [jonathan@artadia.org](mailto:jonathan@artadia.org)

# Art in America

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

DECEMBER 2018

## ALICE TIPPIT

Nicelle Beauchene



Alice Tippet: *Pop*, 2017, oil on canvas, 13 by 10 inches; at Nicelle Beauchene.

The seventeen bold-hued, hard-edge oil paintings in Alice Tippet's second solo show at Nicelle Beauchene ricocheted between significations, thwarting any stable meaning. Each painting seemed less a visual manifestation of a single concept or thing than a vessel for a constellation of intertwined ideas. The image in *Pop* (2017)—comprising two light-brown triangles crowning a peachy, red-tipped orb—conjures inverted ice cream cones, a court jester's hatted head, and a breast, while the composition of *Drape* (2017), in which a purple expanse with a scalloped edge is bounded by a billowing pink frame, brings to mind a stage set, window hangings, and a nude figure seen from behind. Unlike more fully abstract works in which countless referents can be “found,” Tippet's semi-figurative paintings steer viewers toward particular readings, even if multiple ones. More fundamentally, they ask how meaning is made and how forms signify, and where the shifting line is between artist-supplied content and interpretation brought by the viewer.

The forms in the paintings are precisely rendered. Most, whether a svelte flower (*Post*, 2018) or a ruby red pucker (*Born*, 2018), exhibit a bilateral symmetry that Tippet achieved by using a paper stencil of half the image, outlining this guide on one side of the canvas in pencil and then flipping it over to draw the opposite half. In other instances, she sketched her form into the wet ground with a brush. That Tippet prefigured the compositions in these ways is evident in the exactitude with which lines meet corners and edges; she crops and lays down the imagery with a care akin to Ellsworth Kelly's (and with sharp focus: she paints each of her canvases, most of which are between one-and-a-half and two feet per side, in a single day). While the paintings display an overall precision, they are not mechanical-seeming. A cascade of feathery brushstrokes subtly enlivens the pine tree in *Spent* (2018), for instance, while touches of pale, glowing pink give a pliability to the otherwise flatly rendered flesh in the superb *Vise* (2017), which depicts a bent arm propped atop a knee.

Like Helen Lundeborg, Robert Indiana, René Magritte, and Tom Wesselmann, Tippet engages themes of desire and spatial confinement through motifs including windows, vases, and monochromatic expanses of bare skin. But her paintings forgo the irony, object fetishism, and surreality that can be found in her predecessors' work. In place of those qualities is a sincerity, a genuineness with which the artist invites us to join her in the process of making meaning.

— Elizabeth Buhe

# Alice Tippit

Kimmerich, Berlin, Germany

BY MITCH SPEED



Alice Tippit's meticulously crafted paintings mimic those fleeting moments in life when we catch a minuscule glimpse of something, such as the suggestive glance of a passer-by on the street. Her canvases are rendered in muted hues punctuated by flashes of deep blue, burgundy or black. Within the artist's tightly cropped images, bodies and objects become cryptic silhouettes. Often, the paintings deliver an elusive erotic charge. In *Lure* (2016), for example, stars glow in the hollow between two milky greige legs. Mauve-coloured negative space pushes in on these limbs, while the inky firmament tapers upward, stopping just shy of the picture's top edge, and the unidentified character's genitalia.

The atmosphere of Tippit's paintings is one of furtive titillation: here, a wisp of hair falls down an exposed back; there, a purple breast emerges from behind a yellow vase. At the same time, the artist's graphic language and careful tuning of colour persistently return the viewer's attention to the painting's surface – a material body with its own strange fetish power. In *Stroke* (2016), a coral-orange human figure poses in a uniform taupe ground. The work mimics the odalisque tropes of 19th-century French painting. In contrast to the contoured bodies of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres or Henri Matisse, however, this figure is a crisply delineated silhouette. A tiny dark triangle floats on its folded legs, near the figure's knees: a short-hand for the pubic region that recurs in other paintings on view. It's the figure's head that sticks in mind, though: turned away from the viewer, its long black hair is striated with



green highlights. The pose evokes a subtle parody of figure painting's traditionally misogynistic attitude to the female nude.

Occasionally, Tippit's earlier work has slipped into cuteness, blunting the critical potential of her pictorial games. In her exhibition 'Woman on Yellow Motorcycle in Crystal Lake', this happens only once: in *Still* (2016), a painting that features an apple painted in caucasian flesh tones. The artist may be making a witty comment about painting's tendency to reduce bodies to inanimate objects, but the entirely literal depiction of the apple, combined with its dead-centre placement in the canvas, muffles the humour with safe quaintness. *Summon* (2016), on the other hand, achieves a weird and vexing personification of shape. Here, a chalky Naples yellow crescent floats in a deep umber: embellished with a pair of pursed red lips, it mimics a human grin. Layering a cliché of figuration over a droll allusion to it, the painting is a descendant of Rene Magritte's symbolist scenes, which mix impertinence and wonder to uncanny effect.

With their honed surfaces, razor-sharp edges and fastidiously harmonized colours, Tippit's paintings have me wanting to assume the language of a musty aesthete. The show feels a little out of time, and that's partly why it so appeals. Tippit has the swiftness of an old-guard painter like Alex Katz, but she replaces Katz's Hamptons pomp with a coolly acidic frisson. It might seem as though her paintings are out of step with the political exigencies of our day, but political actions can take subtle and surprising forms. Delicately painted, her pictures exude the care of touch. They also play cunning tricks on the patriarchal gaze. Tippit's show left me feeling both prickled and surprised at how easily it got to me.

# The New York Times

## What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week

JULY 14, 2016



Alice Tippit's "Vane."

Courtesy of the artist and Nicelle  
Beauchene Gallery, NY

### Alice Tippit

'Ess Envy'

*Nicelle Beauchene  
327 Broome Street  
Lower East Side  
Through Aug. 12*

In her magnetic small paintings at Nicelle Beauchene, the Chicago artist Alice Tippit slyly juggles dualities of figure and ground, and abstraction and representation. Painted in mostly flat planes of suavely muted colors, these works are metaphorically piquant, subtly funny and often erotically suggestive. In "Vane," an off-white triangle pointing downward on a tan background reads

like an abstracted bikini bottom thanks to a red fingernail-tipped digit overlapping its upper edge. The finger's placement seems a pointed, possibly sexual gesture but remains teasingly enigmatic. Like Ms. Tippit's other works, "Vane" recalls Modernist graphic design of the 1950s — that of Paul Rand, for example — while projecting its own personally resonant visual poetry.

The red-nailed finger turns up again in "Token," as the tail of a winding, pale snake on a dark background. A rotund blue vase shape in the upper-right corner might read like a female counterpart — vagina, womb — to the phallic serpent. There are mythic overtones to that image, as there are in "Iris," in which a bright-yellow banana oriented like a smile rhymes with a small white dome shape above that's like a clipped moon in the night sky. It's a sweet haiku of a picture.

KEN JOHNSON

## CRITICS' PICKS

### New York

#### Alice Tippet

##### NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

327 Broome Street

June 30–August 12

Alice Tippet's boldly graphic, hard-edge paintings are refined and puzzle-like. In these sketchbook-scale works, she offsets a cool, formal harmony with a wry and cryptic language of symbols, arabesques, and geometry. Irregular vases, decontextualized fruit, elongated hands, and weird animals populate her spare compositions, evoking vintage textile design and antique sign painting as well as art history. In *Iris* (all works 2016), a Victorian crescent moon hangs facing down—like a happy, Cyclopean eyelid—in a velvety-black sky. A canary-yellow banana under it makes a big clownish smile. *Flat* is the profile of a forest-green boob with an inverted nipple, set against a coral-flesh background. Or is the nipple-dip not negative space but a protruding part of a concave object in green space instead? Tippet's paintings ask us to toggle between myriad readings. And hues of sepia, peach, and terra-cotta pop up in most of the works on view, so we seek out the body everywhere.



Alice Tippet, *Part*, 2016, oil on canvas, 24 x 20"

Up close, you see the paintings are carefully, subtly constructed, containing rich areas of barely-there color gradients and cross-fades. *Part* might be the most detailed piece. Rendered in a vaguely familiar illustrational style, a sullen face with precise features emerges from a field of beige. The “part”—a midpoint of the subject’s striking hairstyle—doubles as a butt crack. It’s hard not to notice that the dark, wavy shoulder-length hair looks like the silhouette of a person from the back, bent over. Pointed toes and shapely calves raise an ass into the air. Such genial lasciviousness along with painterly lushness lends the artist’s unsolvable riddles rare appeal.

— Johanna Fateman



BLOUINARTINFO

MODERN PAINTERS

## 24 ARTISTS TO WATCH

December 2014

New talent is continually springing up in unanticipated places, approaching the world in unexpected ways. Instead of harkening back to the last 12 months in our year-end issue, we prefer to look forward. In that spirit, we present our annual list of the most compelling artists to emerge from around the globe. However, it is our conviction that artists are the best assessors of their peers. Thus, we've asked a select group of more established artists to let us know who among their younger colleagues they are excited about. We are thrilled to share their recommendations with you below.



*Slip*, 2014. Oil on canvas, 18x15in.

### Alice Tippet

LIVES IN CHICAGO.

#### Describe your process

I make paintings, but I don't identify myself as a painter, mostly because I'm not as invested in the process of painting but more in how the resulting image may be understood, with the history and visual language of painting operating as a potential factor. The paintings themselves are typically created very quickly. All decisions—color, form, degree of painterliness—are worked out beforehand with an eye toward how these choices will affect the reception of the image. Ultimately, I seek to produce images that function as signs in which the interaction of elements produces visual relationships that seem to project specificity while remaining ambiguous enough to allow interpretation and inquiry.

**What inspires you?**

I have an ongoing romance with *Popular Photography*, but only the years 1950 to 1970. I love the mix of advice for amateurs and reader submissions. At that time, amateurs striving for artistry still took their cues from painting, and the results are often mildly terrible and/or modestly weird. The zone of poor decision making vis-à-vis the image is consistently inspiring to me.

**What's on your cultural radar for 2015?**

I dream of making it to the Pierre Huyghe show at LACMA before it departs in February. And I've been making an assault on the Russian Novel (currently, *The Brothers Karamazov*).

**How would you characterize the art scene in your city?**

Chicago is very livable for artists. It's easy to make work here. Will it be seen by anyone besides your friends? Perhaps not. To put it simply, the art pH of the city is out of whack. New York is too acidic, Chicago is too base. L.A. might be the perfect neutral, but then, I hate driving—so Chicago it is.

**What do you have coming up?**

At this point in my life, the future doesn't stretch far beyond the next six months. I will be in a group show at Hap Gallery in Portland, Oregon, in early 2015. The outlines of other opportunities remain a bit blurry.