ELISE ANSEL | WHITEHOT MAGAZINE

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EXHIBITION REVIEW: GREAT ABSTRACT AND ABSTRACT-ADJACENT EXHIBITIONS AROUND NEW YORK

Elise Ansel: Duetti at Miles McEnery, Chelsea (April 2 - May 9, 2026)

The paintings of Elise Ansel are to coloristic abstraction what Marjorie Strider's was to figurative Pop: daring, emboldened, and in-your-face. Her second solo exhibition with Miles McEnery, "Duetti," blew the seams of abstraction to magnified proportions as realized through Ansel's masterful understanding of color theory, brushwork, and Art History.

The enormity of Ansel's painterly presence is not revealed through the scale of compositions, but in the widened swaths of color gracing her paintings. Heavily applied strokes in rectangular formations leave the mark of hitting the linen surface and running - so to speak - before gradually petering out in thinned remnants, before being repeated in other directions and hues. These are remarkable results of an artist who knows how to wrestle with the ideas of paint as movement.



Peach II, 2025, Oil on linen, 60 x 54 inches

Great as they are on formal grounds, Ansel's images are tonal and compositional homages to Titian, one of the most celebrated painters of the Italian Renaissance who, like Ansel, possessed a remarkable command over color. Getting past the additive abstraction, Ansel's paintings steadily reveal the general arrangement of Titian's paintings, but with figures and scenic elements reduced to or replaced by rectangular swooshes and crossings of paints in some of the most magnificent hues loosely recalling the Venetian forebear's attractive style. Ansel is neither copying nor being on the nose about this association but demonstrating how a contemporary painter - someone who is steeped in the now - can still so beautifully keep a foot (or brush) extended into the distant past and make it her own artistic statement.

— *Liam Otero*