

Thomas Erben Gallery



A Selection of Works by: Lucas Blalock, Mike Cloud, Ada Friedman and Rose Wylie

May 28 - July 17, 2026

Opens Thursday, May 28, 6 - 8:30pm

For its summer group show, Thomas Erben Gallery delights in bringing together a decisive group of works by Lucas Blalock, Mike Cloud, Ada Friedman, and Rose Wylie. These artists use collage as a means of expression and strategy, which - combined with their playful use of materials and mediums - results in works that are sometimes darkly humorous, art historically informed, corporeal and even mysterious.

Ada Friedman's irregularly shaped paintings, actually large scale "hangings", are displayed flat on the wall or suspended in space. Made while moving between the studio's floor and wall with layers of paper and fabric, they bear the traces of the artist's process. The multiple applications of paint and the integrated abundance of scribbles, marks and annotations, point toward time spent and sources tapped. "I invite ghosts into my studio", says the artist, and the resulting works are like glyphs, fragile yet enduring witnesses to the mysterious ways of their making.

Fabrics also come into play in Lucas Blalock's *The Covered Piano*, a studio shot of a home piano covered with printed fabric. The photograph's straightforward simplicity, however, is shattered by displaced fragments and time or "clone stamps" drawn from multiple image layers once the negative was scanned and uploaded. Rather than hiding his use of digital tools, Blalock leaves them coarsely visible, considerably adding to the aesthetic possibilities of image construction.

To collage means to add or subtract, if out of displeasure, or to manipulate any given material toward a more visually, emotionally or conceptually satisfying result. In her works on paper, Rose Wylie uses this freedom judiciously: extending paper where she runs out of space, covering results that "don't feel quite right" or adding bits and pieces to further elaborate. In her 2003 painting *Italien [sic] Hats*, Wylie's art historical awareness - here with references to Henry Moore, Julio González and Matisse's *Danse* - does not present as discrete references but a convincing amalgamation all of her own.

The body is viscerally present in Mike Cloud's *Stuffed Paintings*, of which other examples are currently on view in his solo project at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Stitched onto pouches of canvas are children's clothes printed with childhood revelries and comic characters such as Iron Man. These motifs are then rendered with an abundance of paint on plastic sheets and printed back onto the works. The resulting "paintings", which are stuffed and bulge off the wall, convey a sense of taint or corruption to the mass-produced optimism of the motifs and their cheerful colors. This complexity is a result of Cloud's material overlays and processes.

Collage - traditionally associated with paper, glue and scissors - is understood in this exhibition as a generative tool of material, visual and conceptual multiplicity, very much in keeping with the abundant complexity of our times.