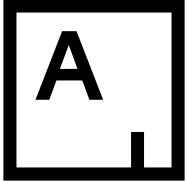


# NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021 [nightgallery.ca](http://nightgallery.ca)

Alina Cohen, "11 Emerging Artists Redefining Abstract Painting," *Artsy*, January 6, 2020.



## 11 Emerging Artists Redefining Abstract Painting

Alina Cohen | Jan 6, 2020 1:00pm

The divide between abstraction and figuration is a false, but helpful, dichotomy. Painters who are primarily concerned with the interactions between color, line, and form also make marks and shapes that may suggest body parts, landscapes, and objects traditionally relegated to still lifes. Even monochrome paintings can conjure familiar settings: A gray canvas might evoke a rock face, while a blue one may suggest the sea.

This principle can go the other way, as well. "I would consider myself a figurative painter fundamentally," artist told me, "but I certainly have a loose idea of figuration—anything that suggests a form, even if this suggestion is faint."

A new generation of painters, all 40 years old or younger, are rethinking what we might call, for lack of a better term, abstraction. For them, labels aren't important. They're more interested in the infinite ways paint can be applied to develop suggestive, beguiling, and transcendent compositions. They explore what it means to make a painting in the digital age and use contemporary research to generate new patterns and designs. Despite the diversity of these artists' practices, a near-mystical devotion to the act of making and a desire to communicate via symbols and hues unites them all.

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## Han Bing

B. 1986, Shandong, China. Lives and works in Los Angeles.



Han Bing hesitates to describe her work as abstract, since she takes inspiration from city streets and architectural façades. She calls these urban elements “poems with authors unknown.”

Han’s layered, jagged shapes conjure the posters torn and replaced, ad infinitum, in the New York City subway stations; her soft scrawls in white and bright yellow suggest graffiti. In some canvases, a representational section adds a moment of surprise. Looking at *Broome III* (2016), for example, the eye travels over layered, gridded rectangles and ragged, wavy swaths of paint to land on what looks like a segment of a glistening, grilled hot dog. In *Silver Lining* (2019), two abstracted faces seem to touch, while a central purple shape in *QUASH* (2019) could be a curtain or floating garment. Yet nothing in these works totally resolves into figuration.

Describing her paintings, Han said that “they are representational at times, but more moments of perplexity, when a few patches met unexpectedly and created a dynamic that made sense to me at that moment.”