

"The Manhattan Art Review"

4/26/2026

Camille Klein - Works on Paper - [Lulu Berlu](#) - ***.5

Alex Freundlich - Disorganized Decorator Snapping Circles - [Fabrizio...](#) - ***.5

I'm hesitant to pass much active judgment on two first-time solo shows that are also the first exhibitions at brand-new apartment galleries. Also, the artists happen to both have been members of the same artist collective so there's some overlap of sensibility, if not the specific substance of their works, so my thoughts tend more towards what they have in common. Both shows are cute to my tastes, but that doesn't bother me because the self-consciously miniature, slightly precious, whimsical, arts and crafts summer camp, etc. approach is a formal pretext for making things, sort of like Richard Tuttle, Ron Nagle, or B. Wurtz. Artists my age had a similar interest in childhood nostalgia when they did their own wave of Ridgewood apartment galleries a decade ago, but they tended to be more nakedly appropriative of pop culture in a way that always bothered me. I've seen this sort of "cute formalism" from younger artists before and it's a generational sensibility that's foreign to me, but I have no trouble appreciating the earnestness and the emergence of a new "Ridgewood scene" style. It reminds me of when I first got into art on the West Coast, where the art scenes in Portland and San Francisco might not have been the most accomplished in the world but at least they had distinct local vibes; Portland had acid-fried surreality, SF had post-skater cartoons and laid-back abstraction with a feeling not too far from Matisse's cut-outs. Actually, if you put those two together you'd end up with something similar to this: Camille's press release references DMT elves and the works are formally floaty and disassociative in a way that I like but don't know how to describe, Alex's "disorganized decorator snapping circles" have something to do with "mouth-anus tract retracts," which sounds like some kind of *Anti-Oedipus* versus Hans Bellmer orifice horror, but they look like reorientations of monkey bars that I definitely could have seen in a Bay Area apartment in 2017. I'm not entirely sure what to make of it all, which is refreshing. We could use an infusion of new blood into the local art landscape right now.