

VAN DER PLAS GALLERY



Dali, Domingo Geronimo Mattle

All Art +: Murmuration July 24 —July 30, with an opening reception Wednesday 26

It takes a lot of art to channel the energy of summer. Our open-call exhibition series, All Art +, reopens this week with 46 works by ___ artists. We're calling this show "Murmuration" to celebrate the perceptual abilities of this creative flock. A murmuration is a scientists' term for what happens when a large group of birds, usually starlings, flies closely together in a continuously changing shape. These displays can be fleeting and intimate, or huge and breathtaking, but they seem always to be a form of choreography in which each individual must perceive the presence of others instinctively. Call it a technique, a response, a way of moving harmoniously—it's also something artists must do to inhabit a public space.

Adriaan van der Plas has stated that in putting together the gallery's All Art + shows, his doors are open to any artist who wants a chance at going public. While the gallery targets emerging artists, he says, "we try to search for the best work from the artists who contact us." It's a deeply personal process and usually involves a panel of staff as well as further requests for work from the artists. "Sometimes it's easier with more seasoned artists, and sometimes it isn't," he sums up. Van der Plas doesn't mind being challenged, or perhaps even irritated by the work he shows. "Everything I hang has its place," he says, "and I will try to get the best from it, to let my curiosity wander. I would not hang art I don't like."

In this new version of the show, abstraction courts figuration, and both may run wild across the landscape. Some examples: Alejandro Caiazza's blotchy humanoids, Dr. Gizo Vadshakidze's scrambled vista in "The Train of Hope," Justin Jenkins's scary skeleton figure, and Robert McCormick's cartoony "Compost #1." Carolyn Fitzgerald's moody assemblages have a riveting story behind them. Nathan Brad Hall's stressed-out self portrait (called "Kingdom Come") introduces a dark and searching mood. Others in the show will be more familiar: Bowery art champion Fred Gutzeit, for instance, and multimedia artist Jerelyn Hanrahan. Gutzeit continues his wry commentary on consumerism with his series on work gloves, while Hanrahan, probably best known for her ceramics, contributes two East Village portraits from the 1980s—"Writer (David)" and "Little Spanish Girl."

"No animal admires another animal," Blaise Pascal alleged, and it's important to note that All Art + is never about who knows who. These opportunities to see and be seen together are more about cooperation. The effect is somehow exuberant and careful, as if artists in a crowded metropolis move with the spatial awareness of birds. The art of the city creates an ephemeral impression that reforms itself from minute to minute, as artists group and regroup. From the superserious to the totally weird, this All Art + grants a place for these birds to fly and yet remain human

--Sally Eckhoff

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