

CHEIM & READ



Louise Fishman



Cheim & Read, through May 2
(see Chelsea)

A septuagenarian of enviable vigor, Louise Fishman persists with an Abstract Expressionist style that, while it may date her, still boasts a likable immediacy. In 19 pictures made over the past three years, Fishman emerges again as an artist in thrall to the physicality of paint. Allowing herself the space to make a variety of gestural marks—with trowels, scrapers and combs, as well as brushes—Fishman packs each sizable canvas with incident.

Ranged around the gallery with no obvious logic apart from a simple alternation of scale, Fishman's paintings pull one pleurably this way and that. *Heart on Fire* (2007), a bold mix of black, white and scarlet, somehow works beautifully next to *A Certain Marvelous Thing* (2007), a modest rectangle of sky-blue strokes that snake across a darker blue ground. *Cooked and Burnt* (2007) is distinguished by its gorgeous veils of sherbet pink and green, while the smaller, simpler *Roughshod* (2001–2009) has a contrastingly opaque construction, functioning here more like punctuation than as a stand-alone work. But perhaps the hit of the show is *Gorgeous Green* (2008), in which lovely, liquid bands of the titular hue ring out from a dun-colored base like the first hints of spring.

Having embraced abstraction in 1973 with her “Angry Women” series, this still-strident feminist proves herself dedicated to exploring the possibilities of process, shunning direct representation of her personal and political concerns in favor of pure color and texture.—*Michael Wilson*