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Pan, Lara. "Lara Pan Around the New York Art World: Sean Kelly Gallery – "Tone" by Sam Moyer, and "Tension Field" by Ilse D'Hollander." *Whitehot Magazine*. April 2021.



Installation view, Sam Moyer, Tone, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York

I finally had the chance to visit an exquisite exhibition at the [Sean Kelly Gallery](#) in New York. I was really looking forward to seeing the new – more intimate and intentionally less imposing – paintings and sculptures by [Sam Moyer](#) and, equally so, to further familiarize myself with and reflect on the paintings of Ilse D'Hollander, whose mostly later works were presented at the Victoria Miro gallery in 2018/2019. An expansion and continuation of the artist's body of work is, therefore, something not to miss.

As I've already hinted, the combination of paintings and sculptures in Moyer's latest work invites us to reconceive her approach; to highlight the relations, the supposedly-defined categories, and the material roles in new ways. What new dependencies and sensibilities do they produce? In this way, the Moyer's works are an attempt to

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miniaturize the ambition of the *Doors for Doris* project, to focus more on the layers of meaning-making and contextualization and less on the experience or corporeality of space itself. Because of this, even though the elements are still there, the emphasis has shifted and now includes new abstractions, i.e. new layers, as the title of her work, *Tone*, suggests.



D' Hollander, Untitled, 1990/1991, mixed media on cardboard, artwork: 27 15/16 x 39 3/8 inches (71 x 100 cm), framed: 31 7/8 x 43 11/16 x 2 3/8 inches (81 x 111 x 6 cm)

On the other hand, the importance of D'Hollander's (1968–1997) body of work has to do with her untimely commitment to tread a middle ground between full abstraction on the one hand, and figuration on the other. In her work, she chooses to roam freely between these two poles of reconfiguring and representing the world. In a truly exquisite way, D'Hollander has produced landscapes of abstraction without a true point of reference or any predetermined forms or a priori meaning to her painting – even if the possibility of finding them is immanent in her work.

In her artistic practice, D'Hollander is surprisingly playful in her paintings, even though this is not clear at first sight. Presented paintings are intentional abstractions, abstractions that don't want to subtract the painter from the painting – there's no pretense to objectivity or full spontaneity. Rather, the focus is on the interplay between the gesture of the painter and the autonomous form(s) of the painting itself; a dialectical interplay between D'Hollander's ideas, material constraints of realizing them, and how

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all of this affects the perceptual space of the viewer. In this way, her works are a disguised sort of magic put on display, always too shy to be flashy, but nonetheless brilliant.

Attendees at the exhibition will have the chance to see D'Hollander's famous use of green, which makes her earlier painting really stand out –the *Untitled* paintings of 1990/1991 especially are impossible to forget. And even if there's a change in the color pallet in her 'late period', which may indicate a possible change in the worldview of the artist, these are still complex works that necessitate our attention and give no easy answers or directions to the viewer. The fact that her work is so multi-dimensional and open-ended is one of her strong suits, as the viewer can't seem to get bored by the dialectical interplay between the sender and receiver – the possibility of decoding information that is encrypted in her canvases. Every artwork is a puzzle, and D'Hollander's paintings embody and exemplify this logic.

The two exhibitions currently present at the Sean Kelly Gallery – *Tone* by Sam Moyer, and *Tension Field* by Ilse D'Hollander – close on April 24, so there's still time to experience these truly superlative paintings and sculptures. **WM**