

Press Release

Mary Heilmann
Home Sweet Home

May 1 – June 05, 2010
Opening Friday, April 30, 4 – 9 pm
Gallery hours Tuesday – Saturday, 11 am – 6 pm



Galerie Barbara Weiss is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition by the internationally renowned American artist Mary Heilmann (born 1940). The show is entitled *Home Sweet Home* and presents over twenty works spanning the past forty years, including paintings, sculptures, photographs and prints.

For many years Mary Heilmann has been active in a large network of art and culture producers, and in the USA she is seen as the most significant non-figurative painter of her generation. Heilmann is generally regarded as an “artist’s artist,” representing an important artistic position that is highly influential in recent revivals of painterly art.

Her work refers to the formal idioms of geometrical modernism and color field painting, combining non-figurative and also figurative elements with the codes of pop culture and arts and crafts. She also links the abstract and the concrete. Things she has herself perceived and experienced - nuances of colors, sounds, human encounters, and places - flow into her dense and colorfully lush compositions. In many of her works Heilmann uses colors and titles that refer to her own childhood and youth on Californian beaches and the beatnik clubs of the Bay Area. On the formal level, slight distortions of the underlying geometrical shapes, sprays and drips of paint on the picture, and a clearly recognizable use of the brushstroke all stand for an artistic approach which utilizes subjective gestures and thus abandons the strict canon of geometrical abstraction.

As *Home Sweet Home* shows, Mary Heilmann’s work is not limited to painting and prints, but also includes pieces of furniture and sculptures in ceramics.

Heilmann transforms the normally neutral space of the gallery into a place that is vibrant with energy and life, using brightly colored wooden chairs (*Clubchair*, 2009), a wooden table painted in pink and orange (*Pink Table*, 2010), and various ceramic sculptures glazed in different colors, including one in the shape of a chair (*Red Chair*, 1982), and others that are reminiscent of a coffee set and interior decorations (e.g. *The Black Hand*, 1983). All of these objects, including the paintings (e.g. *Chair*, 1987), prints (e.g. *Franz West II*, 1997), and the photo diptych *Magic Chair - Floating Table* (1967-72), combine to form an interior that interweaves aspects of art, life, and work into a sensitive network.

Home Sweet Home. This sentimental song title is appropriate for this show, because it is something I heard when I was little. I remember back then I would be around looking at the things in the room and mentally moving them around and using chairs, tables, plates cups and saucers ... pictures on the wall help me daydream. [...] When I am in my studio now (and my studio is my home) I can daydream in the same way ... (Mary Heilmann, from her text on this exhibition).

Mary Heilmann will be attending the exhibition opening.

On the ground floor, the gallery is also showing a simultaneous exhibition of new works by the American artist John Miller (born 1954), *The Totality Of All Things As They Actually Exist*. Miller is an important New York friend of Mary Heilmann and fellow artist.