



Weekend Reviews: Carolyn Case at Asya Geisberg

By LIAM OTERO April 29, 2025



Carolyn Case: Wild Domestic at Asya Geisberg Gallery, Tribeca (on view through May 10)

Slice of life subjects are treated in an entirely novel way through the seemingly abstract paintings of Carolyn Case in her fourth exhibition with Asya Geisberg Gallery. When studying her large-scale work, one will be greeted by a cornucopia of innumerable gestural brushstrokes - possibly in the hundreds - of varying shades, widths, and patterns within a single canvas. However, these are really a conceptual veneer for a world of figurative elements that have been recontextualized from their original place - Case's home. The title "Wild Domestic" is indicative of the artist's intent to synthesize "mess, uncertainty, beauty, and order" from her surroundings as a statement on how creativity and imagination are not only inextricably connected to home, but also elevate one's perception of the ordinary into something far more enchanting. In *Blue Spatula* (2024), a purplish-blue spatula glides in space whilst surrounded by a vortex of curvaceously bent forms that resemble ladles, straws, and other utensils. Meanwhile, the white squared tiles of linoleum flooring towards the lower left reinforce the recognizability of a kitchen. Any other figurative characteristics are deliberately enmeshed within, among, and around smears of layered paint, isolated strokes, playful curlicues, and other dynamic forms. One minute you might guess that a blue-bordered golden shape is a lemon, and the next you spot what appears to be a watermelon slice distinguished by its reddened appearance and pockmarked seeds floating by possibly a clear blue sky. The near recognizability of forms with which we may associate in our own domesticity feels like a wondrous mix of Ellsworth Kelly's subtle nods to representing nature through abstraction and Willem de Kooning's colorfully deconstructed compositions.

In addition to these large canvases, Case's exhibition includes a series of smaller paintings framed by an ostentatious ceramic border that is equally rich with abstracted and figurative elements as the composition contained within. During a second trip to this exhibition, I had the honor of meeting Case and she graciously explained how quotidian sights - a dish rack, kitchen counter, to-do list, etc. - could take on new formal meaning and expression in her paintings. We wound up spending a great deal of time pinpointing specific objects among the pleasing jumble of abstract gestures as if we were partaking in a game of *I Spy!*