

## New Year, New Shows: Recent Exhibitions in Dallas

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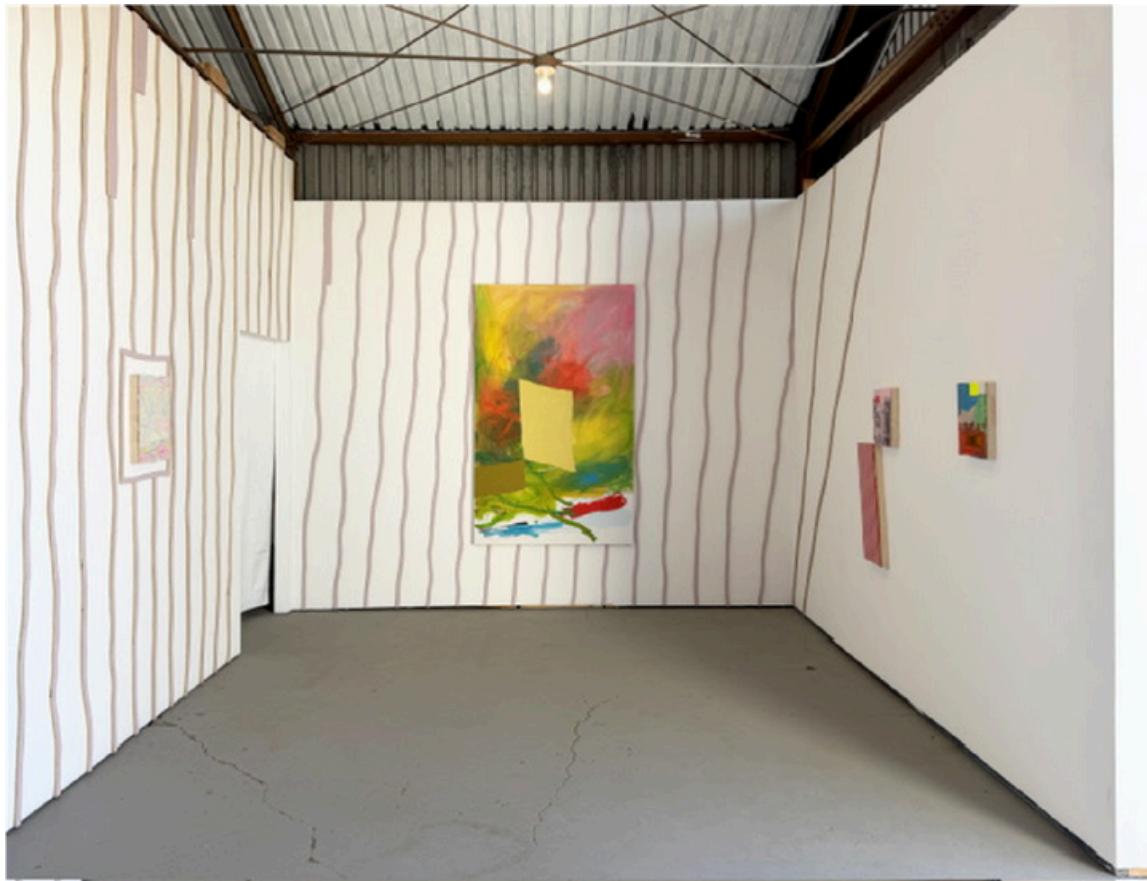
Benjamin Terry: *“joke’s on me”* at Cheerleader

What initially served as a storage warehouse for an apartment complex in the Cedars is now Brent Birnbaum’s new project space, Cheerleader. The artist-run space is the third of its kind for Birnbaum, who co-founded Topless (<https://news.artnet.com/market/an-artist-run-gallery-emerges-in-the-rockaways-48230>) with the late Jenni Crain in Rockaway Beach, New York, from 2014 to 2016. Following Topless was Walter’s (<https://www.wamc.org/new-york-news/2021-06-25/contemporary-wing-coming-to-amsterdams-walter-elwood-museum>), a contemporary wing at the Walter Elwood Museum in Amsterdam, New York, from 2021 to 2023.



*An installation view of Benjamin Terry’s “joke’s on me” at Cheerleader. Photo courtesy of Cheerleader*

Through its truly massive side-hinged garage doors, propped open by a golden lion statue, Cheerleader's aluminum-clad exterior reveals its guts full of industrial steel beams and fresh drywall. Fixed to the walls are a number of Benjamin Terry's sculptural paintings, and running along the perimeter of their surfaces, an installation of thin, light-pinkish-purple wooden slats rest.



*An installation view of Benjamin Terry's "joke's on me" at Cheerleader. Photo courtesy of Cheerleader*

The vertical slats bifurcate paintings, reach for the ceiling, and clasp hands with cobwebs of rebar stretching toward two bright bulbs. A happenstance architectural response, as if the building approves of the work within its contents. To the left of the garage door, the slats extend to the opening, pointing outwards with a finger, saying, "joke's on me."



Benjamin Terry, "Pixie Dust," 2025, paint, wood, glue, 16 x 12 1/2 inches. Photo courtesy of Cheerleader

Benjamin Terry: *joke's on me* is open through February 1, 2026, at Cheerleader, located at 2500 Mansfield Street, Dallas, TX 75215.

#### Kirk Hayes: *New Paintings* and *Phase Four* at Conduit Gallery

And just like that, Conduit Gallery moved (<https://glasstire.com/2025/12/09/conduit-gallery-announces-move-to-new-dallas-design-district-location/>) into its new space next to Cris Worley, supplanting previous tenant Holly Johnson (<https://glasstire.com/2025/12/06/holly-johnson-gallery-in-dallas-has-permanently-closed/>). Inaugurating the new site is a selection of mostly new paintings by Kirk Hayes, accompanied by a group exhibition entitled *Phase Four*, a reference to the gallery's fourth physical move since opening in 1984.

Hayes' work was featured across the Dallas-Fort Worth area last year in Conduit's Dallas Art Fair (<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2025/04/11/dallas-art-fair-trump-tariffs-test-collector-appetites>) booth as well as the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth's exhibition *Alex Da Corte*:



Kirk Hayes, "Edge Sitting in Pink," 2025, oil and enamel on signboard, 36 x 33 inches. Photo: Kevin Todora, courtesy of Conduit Gallery

Hayes' paintings depict pink, battered, and bandaged figures entrapped in scenarios of imminent doom. Situated in final destinations, one figure soaks in a spilled pile of bubble-gum pink fluid, legs dangling over the edge of a black pit, and eyes bulging forward in a fixed gaze. Two lovers, lip-locked, detached from their bodies, hover above an empty void, words scrawled above their heads read "Last Kisses." I'm transfixed by the morbid romance of it all.



Kirk Hayes, "Last Kisses," 2025, oil and enamel on signboard, 44 x 32 inches. Photo: Kevin Todora, courtesy of Conduit Gallery

Led to believe the paintings are composed of mixed media and layers of substrates collaged together, viewers may be shocked to find out it's only paint, really, that's it. Hayes' masterfully hyperrealistic and originally stylized *trompe-l'œil* techniques have garnered the self-taught artist a cult following.

Many other works by Conduit's represented artists glittered the salon hang of *Phase Four*, but three cheeky, absurd works with animal subjects stole my heart. With his nondominant hand, artist W. Tucker draws an elephant with mittens for hands and shoes on his feet, humanizing his presence. In Margaret Meehan's work, an owl, with her breasts and vulva exposed, stands

resiliently, guarding a group of small women near her talons; one woman even rests on the owl's head. C. Meng's acrylic painting features a panda driving a vintage buggy. Need I say more?



C. Meng, "Sunday Afternoon," 2025, acrylic on canvas on board, 7 1/2 x 15 1/2 inches. Courtesy of Conduit Gallery

Kirk Hayes: *New Paintings* and *Phase Four* are on view at Conduit Gallery through February 14, 2026.

Celia Eberle: *Angels Exit* and William Cannings: *Suspense of Disbelief* at Cris Worley Fine Arts

Right next door, at Cris Worley Fine Arts, Celia Eberle and William Cannings take center stage. Eberle's highly anticipated painting show, *Angels Exit*, features acrylic paintings on pink insulation foam depicting animals, creatures, and angels in luminous scenes.



Celia Eberle, "The Angels Exit," 2025, acrylic on pink insulation foam, 19 x 21 inches. Courtesy of Cris Worley Fine Arts

It's been nearly two decades since Eberle has presented paintings as her conceptual practice has led her down multiple avenues into varying mediums and traditions. Featured in the gallery's office, a series of Eberle's anatomical hearts dot the wall with their cacophony of colors, forms, and intriguing found objects.

A curatorial treat I quite favored was the strategic placement of Eberle's painting, *The Angels Exit* — a nude winged figure riding a cloud floats off into the distance. Just beyond the pictorial painting, in the next room, Cannings' massive pair of inflated steel angel wings rest buoyantly on the wall.



William Cannings, "Wings," 2025, inflated steel, acrylic, urethane paint, rubber valve, 66 x 72 x 11 inches.  
Courtesy of Cris Worley Fine Arts

Celia Eberle: *Angels Exit* and William Cannings: *Suspense of Disbelief* are on view at Cris Worley Fine Arts through February 14, 2026.

Amalia Angulo: *Outer* at Keijsers Koning

Keijsers Koning's first show of the year is also the gallery's first solo presentation of Cuban artist Amalia Angulo. *Outer* features portraits of women with animal companions, made in oil, graphite, and colored pencil.



Amalia Angulo, "Woman with Horse," 2025, oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches. Courtesy of Keijzers Koning

In the tradition of human and animal portrait painting, Angulo skillfully captures the bonds between her subjects, but in a rather uncanny light. Each set of companions contained in their canvases emanates an aura of unease. While the horse's gaze is serene and sly, her homo sapien sidekick glares at the viewer with wide eyes, red cheeks, and a stiff composure.



Amalia Angulo, "Woman with her Cat," 2025, oil on canvas, 24 x 24 inches. Courtesy of Keijzers Koning

Angulo's portraits hold mysterious narratives absorbent to interpretation. Embedded in enchanting, overgrown foliage, each subject is isolated in a realm of their own. What lies beyond their frames may be imagined by viewers, but is ultimately unknown.

Antonio Lechuga, Saba Besier, and Francesca Brunetti: *Loving is Caring* at Liliana Bloch Gallery

Liliana Bloch Gallery showcased three artists working across three mediums for their first show of the year. Entering the gallery, Saba Besier's bleached coral reefs crafted from ceramic porcelain, meet your eye. Their lack of saturation and color allows the small clusters to disappear into the low-lit white walls.



*Antonio Lechuga, "Our Lady's," 2024, cobija (fleece blankets), thread, 26 x 24 inches. Courtesy of Liliana Bloch*

Selected works by Antonio Lechuga reveal cozy, soft surfaces with cosmic content. A pane of blue, crowded with yellow star flecks, flutters across a fleece blanket foundation. Nearby, a larger work by Lechuga visualizes a vast pink sky and textured tufts of upright clouds. On the black ground stands a glimmering dark horse with golden wings perched, ready for flight.



*Antonio Lechuga, "Still Here (Voca Me Cum Benedictis)," 2024, applique textile, cobija (fleece blankets), thread, 26 x 24 inches. Courtesy of Liliana Bloch*

*Loving is Caring* displays Francesca Brunetti's visual explorations of eco-feminism by navigating philosophical narratives such as Plato's allegory of the cave. Brunetti's digital drawings, watercolors, and animations of feminine figures, insects, and fungal forms tell reimaged stories of aged mythologies.

Selected works from Antonio Lechuga and Saba Besier, as well as Francesca Brunetti: *Loving is Caring*, are on view at Liliana Bloch Gallery through February 14, 2026.

Drea Cofield: *Wish You Were Here* and Erika Jaeggli: *Magdalenian Suite* at Galleri Urbane

Two painting shows at Galleri Urbane unveil settings and subjects above and below the Earth. Erika Jaeggli renders the internal walls of cave systems by memory while Drea Cofield captures photos of nude figures, *en plein air* landscapes, and interiors in oil.



Erika Jaeggli, "Lascaux (20)," 2025, oil on linen, 14 x 11 inches. Courtesy of Galleri Urbane

Magdalenian Suite shows an evolution in Jaeggli's body of work from her last solo presentation at Giant Runt, a new gallery in Fort Worth. From her experiences as a caver traversing the underbelly of the soil we walk on, Jaeggli reveals the traces of paleolithic visual remnants. Lit only by a headlight and lacking imaging tools, Jaeggli reimagines cave drawings through abstracted brushwork.



*Drea Cofield, "Babe in the Woods," 2025, oil on cardboard, 7 x 5 inches. Courtesy of Galleri Urbane*

*In an expansion of her ongoing Send Me Your Selfies project, in which Cofield accepts nudes from individuals to capture in paint, the inclusion of sites from international travels encompasses the selections in *Wish You Were Here*.*

From fixed-lude, forested images of exposed backsides and dangling appendages to depictions of serene and active locations in France, Oahu, New Mexico, Brooklyn, and more, Cofield expands her focus while staying within the confines of her minute canvases.