

HYPERALLERGIC

8 Art Shows to See in New York City This May

Vibrant colors and fantastical creatures are in abundance in shows by Sanam Khatibi, Julia Bland, Claude Lawrence, Annette Wehrhahn, and others.



Maybe it's something in the springtime air — all the new growth and wild nature — but fantastical landscapes and creatures seem abundant in galleries this month. While Sanam Khatibi's uncanny scenes feel like memento mori transplanted to a land between life and death and Joy Curtis's strange anatomies reimagine life as we know it, Hell Gette's brightly colored worlds combine art history with a Saturday morning cartoon aesthetic.

Meanwhile, Rebecca Goyette and Florencia Escudero delve into technicolor imaginations as Julia Bland, Claude Lawrence, and Annette Wehrhahn saturate the gallery spaces with the soaring colors of their abstract works. — Natalie Haddad, Reviews Editor

Joy Curtis: *Night Hike and Ocean Grandma*

The body is central to Curtis's art, with its corporeal forms that evoke spines, skeletons, and organs, so the recent performance by Michael Mahalchick "wearing" her soft sculptures at the gallery was a perfect complement to the work. Fans of Kafka would immediately recognize the *Metamorphosis* that occurred during the event, and the strange appendages of Curtis's art makes the transformation almost appealing. Her love of indigo dye, transparency, and new skins is apparent in her current show, and the results are, at certain times, anthropological and at others fantastic, in the ways her biological imagination manifests.

"Ocean Grandma, Sympathetic/Parasympathetic, and Future Organs" (2022–23) is at the center of the show, and it encapsulates her soft biofuturism that verges on the epic — my first reaction was that someone dissected the Greek mythological figure of Icarus and placed it on display (her work, I find, has always encouraged such leaps of fancy). The care and delicacy of her art challenges you to see her scale differently, and the results are hard to categorize, thwarting any attempts to "get" it. Maybe that's why I keep coming back for more. Highly recommended. — Hrag Vartanian