

# The New York Times

WILL HEINRICH

## Bernhard Buhmann

*Through Nov. 12. Marinaro, 1 Oliver Street, Manhattan; 212-989-7700, marinaro.biz.*

The large-scale compositions of demurely exuberant shapes that constitute most of the Austrian painter Bernhard Buhmann's American debut, "Fragments of Statue," look sweet and old-fashioned, but a faintly bitter aftertaste of self-consciousness puts them squarely in the present day. Rounded corners, together with the occasional gradation and imperfect edge or drip, create a curious suggestion of depth that hovers at the corner of the eye. The pieces look as if they should look flat, but don't quite. On any given canvas, similarly, the colors are so well balanced as to very nearly cancel out to nothing, but Mr. Buhmann always leaves just enough discord to hold viewers' attention.



Bernhard Buhmann's "Captain (II)," from 2017. Marinaro, New York and Carbon 12, Dubai

"Captain (II)" moves loosely in a spiral, from a block of orange in the bottom right through maroon, blue and increasingly pale shades till it reaches a fine peach trapezoid; in "Fast Car (Self-Driving)," the same orange appears as a circle resting on a fuchsia railing.

In four figurative canvases, though, this stately march of earnest irony explodes into prismatic complication, with views of a halved and doubled cabaret figure seen as if through a cut glass chandelier. In "Checks and Balances (Figure)," she wears a gemlike top hat and an enormous blue beard that curls into the shape of a butterfly wing; in "Janus," she's in profile back-to-back with herself, blue and purple circles marking her cheeks and stylized puffs of cigarette smoke emanating from her lips.