

# The New York Times

## What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries Right Now

### Ever Baldwin

Through Aug. 13. Marinaro, 678 Broadway, Manhattan; 212-989-7700, [marinaro.biz](http://marinaro.biz).



Ever Baldwin's "New Fit" (2022), in the exhibition "Quiet Yes" at Marinaro. via Ever Baldwin and Marinaro, New York

This touching show introduces Manhattan to the wry, visionary paintings of Ever Baldwin, a 44-year-old artist, who has worked primarily as a sculptor. Creating a pure yet eroticized semiabstract presence seems to be the goal of these richly colored, symmetrical compositions of curling, swelling shapes. Suggestions of faces, torsos, body parts abound, as well as landscapes, garments and architecture. Spheres function as both eyes and breasts, buttocks as hills; vulvas as pathways. Adding to the painted action are blackened hand-carved frames whose knobs, curves and curlicues insinuate further physiognomic and decorative detail. Fireplaces, altarpieces, haunted mirrors and puppet theaters also enter the mix.

In “New Fit,” a demonic face or mask is defined by burning red eyes, while a pair of bent off-white tree trunks and two ellipses of vivid blue account for nose and cheeks; below them the frame serves as bow-tie lips, tightly closed. In “Split Reed,” a double scoop of lavender with a high notched collar of deep yellow framing an orange orb might be a bowing priest. The frame adds another head and shoulders and enormous fingers (six to a side) that thrust the painting toward us.

Baldwin is indebted to the early American modernism of painters like Marsden Hartley, Arthur Dove and Georgia O’Keeffe as well as Charles Demuth’s poster portraits, especially his great 1928 “I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold” in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The conviction that forms have meaning verges on overheated but is leavened by wit. *ROBERTA SMITH*