

the PARIS REVIEW

Staff Picks: "All Over the Moon" at Cheim & Read

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August 10, 2018

I experienced the new Cheim & Read show, "All Over the Moon," as a Monty Hall problem for an audience lured by the title's promise of joy, a sort of trilemma of the liberated imagination. The three artists, Laurel Sparks, Lily Stockman, and Richard Tinkler, all work in the abstract. The show is curated by Jack Pierson, and the intrigue rests on the fact that the three showcased visions of being, each in separate rooms, seem difficult to synthesize. In the largest room are Richard Tinkler's oil paintings, which have an extravagant, consciousness-expanding style, using geometrics and symmetries that nonetheless depict a seductive sense of chaos, a portal to getting lost. **In the adjacent room, we leave behind Tinkler's daunting cosmic Expressionism for Laurel Sparks's assemblages of glitter, papier-mâché, crayon, ash, beads, and beyond. Her work shares Tinkler's spontaneity, but the diversity in materials brings an infantile state of play to the canvas. Her pieces call to mind a child's arts-and-crafts sensibility, imbued with talismanic shapes, suggesting transcendental properties of play.** The final room belongs to Lily Stockman, who works with oil on linen. She holds degrees in painting and botany and studied Buddhism in Mongolia. Her muted hues and smooth textures bring a relieving visual silence after the stimulation of the prior rooms, and her formal studies all come together on the canvas. The eye and mind may rest here, especially within *Jordan Pond*, my favorite piece of the show. As I left the Stockman room and then the gallery, I thought of a Talking Heads line: "Heaven is a place / where nothing ever happens."