

Jennifer Coates in New York

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Published: September 25, 2008

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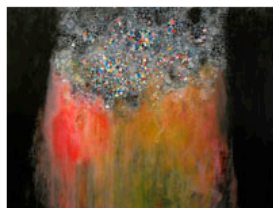


PHOTO GALLERY
Jennifer Coates in New York

NEW YORK—**Jennifer Coates** takes pleasure in the act of painting and revels in the potential of a medium that has been declared dead and come back to life so many times that it now seems fresher than ever. The New York–based artist—who also writes on art for such publications as *Time Out New York*—engages in a tug-of-war with each work to come up with a unique answer to the age-old question, When is a painting done? In her latest solo exhibition at [Kinz, Tillou + Feigen](#) in New York (through October 18), there are no cookie-cutter formulas. Rather, the determined Coates creates varied but cohesive works that hearken back to Abstract Expressionism, with colonies of geometric forms that both float in nebulous spaces, and, rendered mostly in bright hues, pop from the surface.

Paintings such as *Poundland* (2008) are deceptively simple. At first glance, the acrylic-on-canvas work seems like one of the more straightforward compositions of the bunch, but look closer, and you might find yourself doing a double take and wondering what you're looking at. Is it an aerial view or just a cluster of shapes? Ultimately, it doesn't matter; the varied ways the paint is applied and how the forms are rendered pull you in. *Aurora* (2008), with its playful, atmospheric quality, distinguishes itself with a molecular structure hovering near the top, a kaleidoscopic form hanging peacefully in outer space. In *Boreal Forest Oppen* (2008), bright, globular jumbles emerge from a **Brice Marden**-esque background of snaking lines layered on top of a dripping, indefinite background. Coates, who spends her summers in rural Pennsylvania, is also showing a series of six untitled ink-on-

paper drawings that are more straightforward and representational than her paintings, but which hold their own as fantastical landscapes. With passages of dense, thickly applied, and crosshatched areas mixed with undefined forms, they could easily be illustrations for a **Tolkien** novel of a mythic land more magical than ours.

Coates picks five exhibitions on view in New York:

1. **Allison Schulnik: No Luck Too** at [Mike Weiss Gallery](#), through October 11

"Lonely and wilted figures hunch in desert emptiness, as though they've been fired from a bankrupt circus. Flowers are offered as some kind of consolation, but even they seem dejected and forlorn. Schulnik renders her protagonists in intensely encrusted, pleasingly gooey paint on large canvases—or in crumpled bits of colored clay, as in her animated work *Hobo Clown*. I want to spend more time with all of these bozos, talking about their feelings."

2. **Baker Overstreet: Folles** at [Fredericks & Freiser](#), through October 4

"Overstreet's paintings depict incongruous hybrids that look like pinball games merged with Tantric painting, or folk art with spaceships. He assembles bright shapes of color in symmetrical structures on black grounds that bring to mind the past and future simultaneously."

3. **Roland Flexner: Cuts** at [D'Amelio Terras](#), through September 27

"The artist has arranged small drawings on picture stones in a dense grouping. Each object presents an image that recalls a mythic, rolling, crepuscular landscape, but in miniature. Slow accident—the action of water eroding stone over millennia—and fast—the action of water mixing with ink—coexist in close proximity. Larger ink-on-paper pieces hang behind the installation, providing a vaster and more complex glimpse into Flexner's automatist evocations."

4. **Paul Feeley: Nine Paintings** at [Matthew Marks](#), through October 25

"Feeley's paintings are playful and emblematic, bringing to mind toys, distilled art-historical decoration, and certain cartoon homuncull that appeared on television and in video games long after his death in 1966. The simplicity and directness of these paintings give the mind a calm space to rest, which is especially welcome on a jam-packed day of art viewing in Chelsea."

5. **Robert Bordo: It's always raining** at [Alexander and Bonin](#), through October 11

"Bordo's nuanced landscape-based abstractions look like views out a rainy car window. They are atmospheric and muted, and it feels like we're far from the space being depicted but also mysteriously up close. Subtle color shifts and painted marks that accumulate in layers generate feelings of comfort and melancholy."

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