

What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in August

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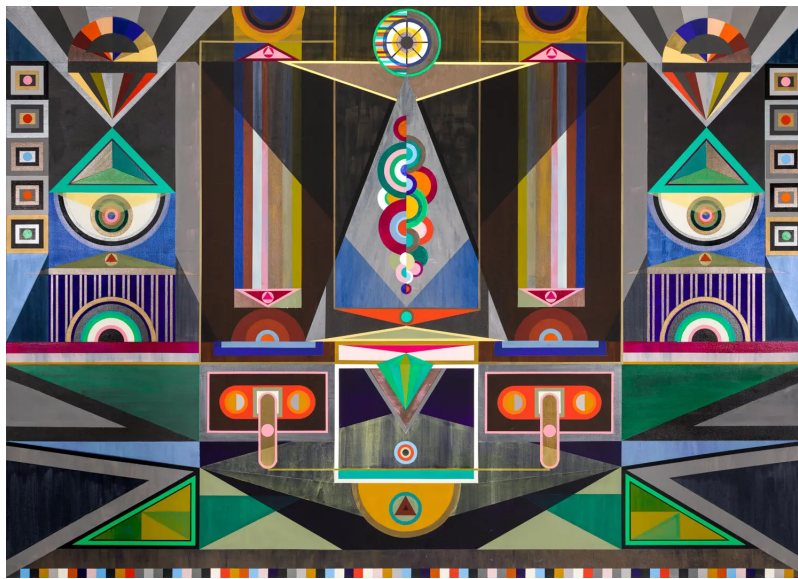
Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Check out diagrammatic paintings in Chelsea or Catharine Czudej's fun house on the Upper East Side. And don't miss Lap-See Lam's first U.S. solo show on the East Village.

Newly Reviewed

CHELSEA

'Schema: World as Diagram'

Through Aug. 15. Marlborough, 545 West 25th Street, Manhattan; 212-541-4900, marlboroughnewyork.com.



"Shake off your chains! ..." (2023) by Hilma's Ghost, a feminist artist collective established by Dannielle Tegender and Sharmistha Ray, in the exhibition "Schema: World as Diagram." via Dannielle Tegender and Sharmistha Ray and Marlborough Gallery, New York

When the paintings of the blockbuster Swedish artist Hilma af Klint, who died in 1944, were first shown publicly in the 1980s, some critics argued that the works looked more like diagrams illustrating occult ideas than abstract paintings. Later audiences and critics disagreed. Tastes have changed perhaps — but so has our relationship to diagrams, as John Bender and Michael Marrinan asserted in their book "The Culture of Diagram" (2010).

"Schema: World as Diagram" focuses on artists — mostly painters — who use the diagram in formal, conceptual and sometimes playful ways. Some use it to describe social, political and personal structures, such as Mike Cloud, Alan Davie, David Diao, Thomas Hirschhorn, Mark Lombardi and Loren Munk. Grids, networks and circuit boards appear in works by Alfred Jensen, Paul Pagk, Miguel Angel Ríos. Maps are a touchstone for Joanne Greenbaum and the aboriginal painters Jimmy and Angie Tchooga. More cosmic diagrams appear in paintings by Chris Martin, Karla Knight, Paul Laffoley, Trevor Winkfield and Hilma's Ghost (the artists Dannielle Tegender and Sharmistha Ray), who take af Klint as an inspiration.

For Raphael Rubinstein, who organized the show with his wife, Heather Bause Rubinstein, the diagram, which only became important in the 20th century in European and American art, closes the gap between abstract and representational art. Maybe this rich, dense show signals a shift, though: Who cares about abstraction anymore? Viva the diagram! Like painting itself, diagramming is a way of thinking and organizing information — speedier than the written word, more graphic and visual. In a chaotic, overstimulating world, no wonder diagrams are so popular. **MARTHA SCHWENDENER**