

Canvas innovations, 1950s teens, Fierce Pussy and more

By Rafael Risemberg

DONA NELSON

A 35-year survey of Dona Nelson's paintings at Thomas Erben Gallery in Chelsea shows how far this artist has come. Her earlier works on display, from as far back as 1973, are more or less standard abstractions and one figurative female portrait. Nelson's breakthrough seems to have occurred around 1992, as represented by one painting of hands constructed from canvas strips that are glued to the supporting canvas. Subsequent experiments with texture include two lively paintings incorporating cheesecloth and one using modeling paste. But Nelson's most innovative piece is her most recent: a double-sided work from 2008 in which acrylic paint was applied to the back and then forced through the canvas using a water hose. Utilizing canvas as membrane is an imaginative and vigorous extension of action painting. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Tues.-Sat., until May 31, at Thomas Erben Gallery: 526 W. 26th St., No. 412, thomaserben.com, 212-645-8701.



From left: DONA NELSON's 'My Home IV.01,' cheesecloth and acrylic mediums on canvas, 90 x 60 inches.

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