

Pop Art's Long Tail Snakes Between Katz and Kass

—M. Osberg
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Alex Katz
Ariel (Black and White), 2016
Meyerovich Gallery

Though born 25 years apart, Alex Katz and Deborah Kass share deep ties to the New York City art scene. Both artists have been heavily influenced—whether through adoption or dismissal—by Pop Art aesthetics. This month, works from each artist are on view together at Meyerovich Gallery in San Francisco, where it's possible to trace the vast historical ripples of a controversial arts movement nearly 70 years after its birth.



Alex Katz
Reflection, 2010
Meyerovich Gallery



Alex Katz
Sara, 2012
Meyerovich Gallery

Whereas Kass set out to rewrite the Pop Art legacy, Katz has historically been interested in reinterpreting it, both in his subject matter and execution. His paintings and prints borrow from Pop Art—in particular, his midcareer works display an obsession with the language of advertising—but the artist recently settled into something that folds that aggressive graphic language into something more muted.



Alex Katz
Red Hat Ada, 2015
Meyerovich Gallery



Alex Katz
White Impatiens, 2016
Meyerovich Gallery

Katz, who has spent much of his later life in Maine, spoke of his images as being “surface” works, a label that applied to their flat tonality as well as the simpler impulses his work engaged. He is perhaps known for landscapes and renderings of beautiful women; he considered his wife a muse, and his portrait of famed fashion editor Anna Wintour is definitive. At Meyerovich, monochromatic backgrounds and stark shapes—his signature style—portray the quiet natural world that surrounds him. *White Impatiens* (2016) and *White Roses* (2014) resemble the geometry of stained glass, while a silkscreen in black and white shows a woman at leisure.



Deborah Kass
Red Deb, 2012
Meyerovich Gallery



Deborah Kass
Blue Deb, 2012
Meyerovich Gallery

Kass’ paintings carry a more overt, recognizable influence. Her “Deb” series (2012) appropriates Warhol’s work, conceptualized through the lens of her own interest in gender and sexual politics; the Brooklyn-bred artist has been vocal about the effect her lesbian identity has had on her sense of self within the art world. Borrowing Warhol’s toolkit, Kass’ series places her own face front and center in a meditation on Pop Art and fame in the modern age.

“Katz & Kass: New Works” is on view at Meyerovich Gallery, Mar. 1–May 31, 2016.