

The New York Times

# Review: Carrie Moyer's *Conflagration of Canvases*

By Martha Schwendener

March 24, 2016



Carrie Moyer's "Belvedere," from 2016, part of a show of new paintings at DC Moore that explores competing energies. Carrie Moyer and DC Moore Gallery, New York

Carrie Moyer's new paintings bring to mind the opening lines of Robert Frost's famous epigram, "Fire and Ice," hinting at the equally destructive powers of love and hate: "Some say the world will end in fire, Some say in ice. From what I've tasted of desire/I hold with those who favor fire."

Ms. Moyer favors fire, too. The hot, intense canvases in “Sirens,” at DC Moore, have titles like “Conflagration With Bangs” (2015) and “Red Hot Plot Hole” (2016) and feature flames painted in warm colors and covered with iridescent glitter (the painterly material of the moment). Some of the paintings have passages that look scorched or melted.

But in the same way Frost’s poem ends with an abrupt reversal — “for destruction ice/Is also great/And would suffice” — Ms. Moyer introduces competing energies into these works. “In a Cool Blaze” (2015) has icy, sinuous white and blue plumes on the left side and red and purple flames on the right.

The push-pull of potential opposites is present on a larger scale, too. Ms. Moyer’s work has been compared to that of abstract painters like Helen Frankenthaler, Jules Olitski and Arthur Dove — but also to that of representational models like Georgia O’Keeffe, and her proto-feminist iconography, or ancient fertility symbols. These appear in vestigial form in canvases like “Red Planet” (2016) and “Candy Cap” (2016).

Regardless of the category or explanation, Ms. Moyer is at the top of her game in this show. Holding all these forces in dialectical tension, her abstraction might be your representation; her fire, your ice. Both are great and would suffice.