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On the Ephemeral Beauty of Community: Yi Gallery Presents Leah Harper (Review)

1 WEEK AGO by [ADAM ASLAN \(HTTPS://ARTEFUSE.COM/AUTHOR/ADAM-ASLAN/\)](https://artefuse.com/author/adam-aslan/)



Installation view, Leah Harper: Mitosis at Yi Gallery.

[Leah Harper: Mitosis at Yi Gallery \(https://gallery-yi.com/exhibitions/15-leah-harper-mitosis-solo-exhibition/\)](https://gallery-yi.com/exhibitions/15-leah-harper-mitosis-solo-exhibition/)

April 10 – May 15, 2021

Yi Gallery's latest exhibition "Mitosis" presents works by Leah Harper that provide a new narrative on community via a focus on abstract forms resembling some of the ocean's oldest and most mysterious creatures.

At a time when communal structures are breaking down and being reshaped, the work of Leah Harper provides a stunning comparison to the uniqueness of how humans relate to each other in her solo exhibition at Yi gallery.



Leah Harper, Colony 7 (2021), Glazed porcelain

The glazed porcelain works in the "Colony" series showcase the organic creation of communities resembling underwater creatures. Harper places a lot of focus on the organic nature of these colonies which speaks to the organic nature that ocean colonies form on the ocean's floor. The coexistence of these clusters of creatures is analogous to cityscapes that highlight Harper's influence in architecture.

Harper calls her work "groupings of organic, biomorphic vessels coexisting". The abstraction of sea life further blurs the lines of what the viewer experiences, creating infinite connections to the relational networks and clustered structures that mark day-to-day experience.

In many ways, the strength of this exhibition lies in the dialogue created on the beauty of sea life's communal coexistence. These arrays of colorful and strangely shaped organisms have survived despite the years of living in the harsh environments of the ocean floor and humanity's disregard for the effects of pollution on ocean ecologies.

Harper's aesthetic of community translates from the clay micro-installations of "Colony" to the gauche paintings of the "Family" series. "In drawing, as with my sculpture, I like simple and light geometries and color palettes." Harper's communities are soft and gentle, bringing a sense of support through a few well-chosen colors inviting the viewer to a more sublime community.

In some ways, the abstraction of the human experience has a biomorphic quality.

Our memories resemble our lived moments and connect to them in an organic way but they lose form and other essential characteristics.



Installation view, Leah Harper: Mitosis at Yi Gallery

The fragile and ephemeral "Orbs" provide light, but also serve as an example of the bearable lightness of being, radiating for a moment but destined to change. The combination of light, fabric, and resin creates a moving abstraction on one of nature's oldest organisms, the comb jelly.



Installation view, Leah Harper: Mitosis at Yi Gallery

Subtlety is an often overlooked quality in art as the focus needed can require the viewer to take an uncomfortable amount of time to observe more subtle qualities in an art piece. The benefit of this extended focus time is a true appreciation of the uniqueness of shape, texture, and color of each element that Harper so expertly creates regardless of the material Harper chooses to work in.

This is the last weekend to view "Mitosis". It is on view till May 15 at Yi Gallery, located at 56 Bogart St next to the Morgan L stop. Visit [www.https://gallery-yi.com](https://gallery-yi.com) (<http://www.yigallery.com>) for more info.

Images courtesy of Yi Gallery and the artist



Leah Harper, Multiplication 1 (2021), Gouache on watercolor paper



Leah Harper, Colony 2 (2021), Glazed porcelain

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ADAM ASLAN IS AN ART WRITER, CURATOR, AND ARTIST WHO ALSO RUNS ZXY GALLERY BASED IN BROOKLYN.

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