

Perrotin

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See Painter Emily Mae Smith’s Delightful Pop Symbolist Art From Her First Show at Perrotin Tokyo

Can't make it to Tokyo? See the luscious paintings here.

Caroline Goldstein, August 28, 2019



Emily Mae Smith, *Gleaner Odalisque* (2019). Photo: Charles Benton. Courtesy the artist and Perrotin.

“Emily Mae Smith: Avalon” at Perrotin, Tokyo On view through November 9, 2019

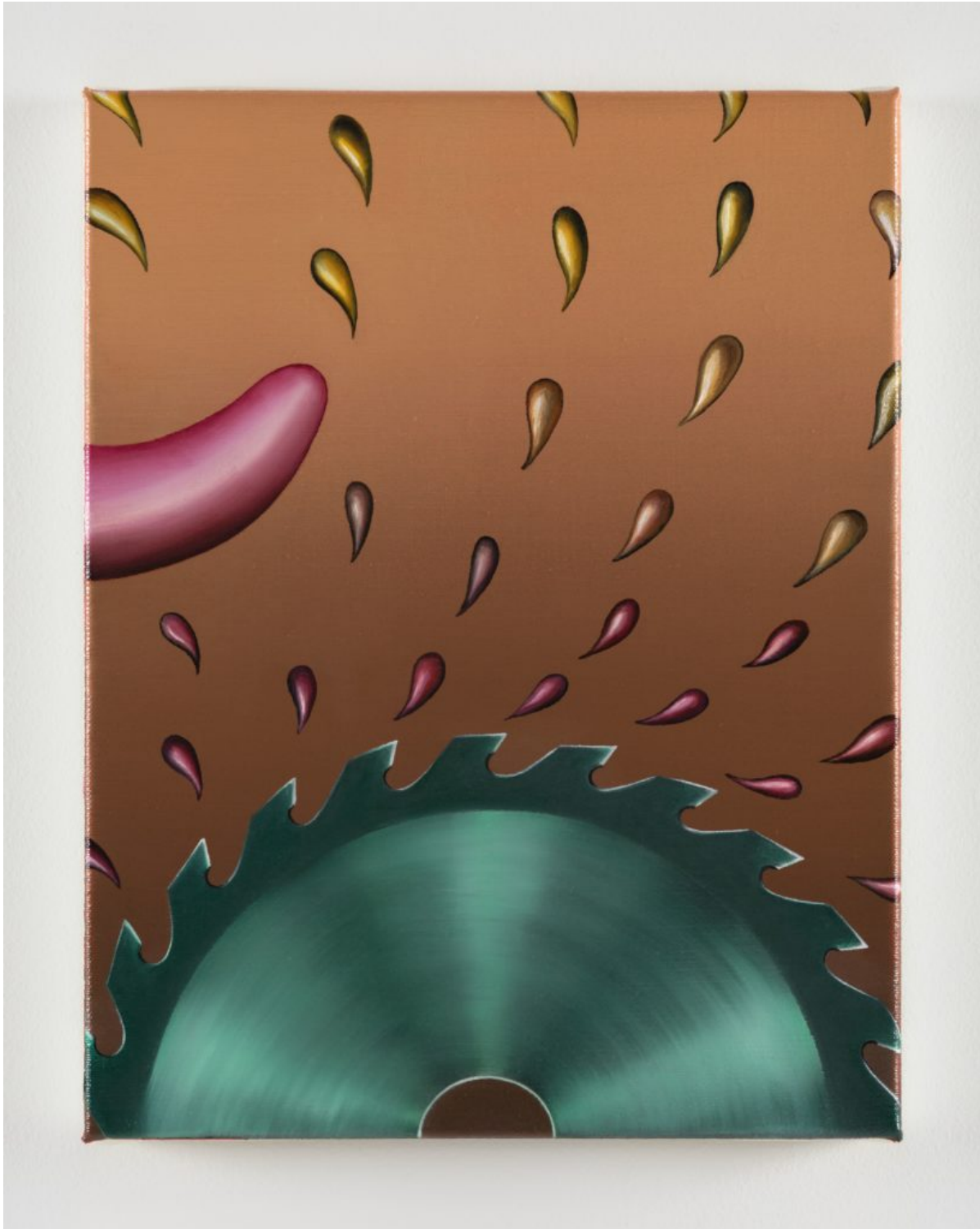
What the Gallery Says: In the gallery’s press release, poet and *Nation* art critic Barry Schwabsky writes, “Smith has evidently been looking as long as she’s been painting: her references encompass a big chunk of the history of Western painting, including often-overlooked episodes like nineteenth-century Symbolism, as well as a vast swath of the popular or commercial arts, from Art Nouveau graphics through Disney animation to the psychedelic posters of the Summer of Love. Not surprisingly, Smith has observed that almost all this art was made by men for the delectation of other men. Her determination, in accordance with the times, was to put her own perceptions and experience as a woman into the picture—and to have fun doing it.”

Why It’s Worth a Look: In the spunky, surreal world of Brooklyn-based painter Emily Mae Smith, an anthropomorphized broom is the central character—based on the dancing brooms from Disney’s *Fantasia*—she wears a bristled skirt with an attenuated, very phallic torso. In one painting, titled *Gleaner Odalisque*, the object-person lounges seductively à la the Ingres original, complete with a pleated blue curtain and silky pillows. Other tableaux feature almost cartoonish objects—the clasp of overalls; a tongue making for a circular saw, captured mid-lick; and a suggestive snake wrapped around an ominous hourglass laden with ripe fruit, painted in detailed, clean strokes.

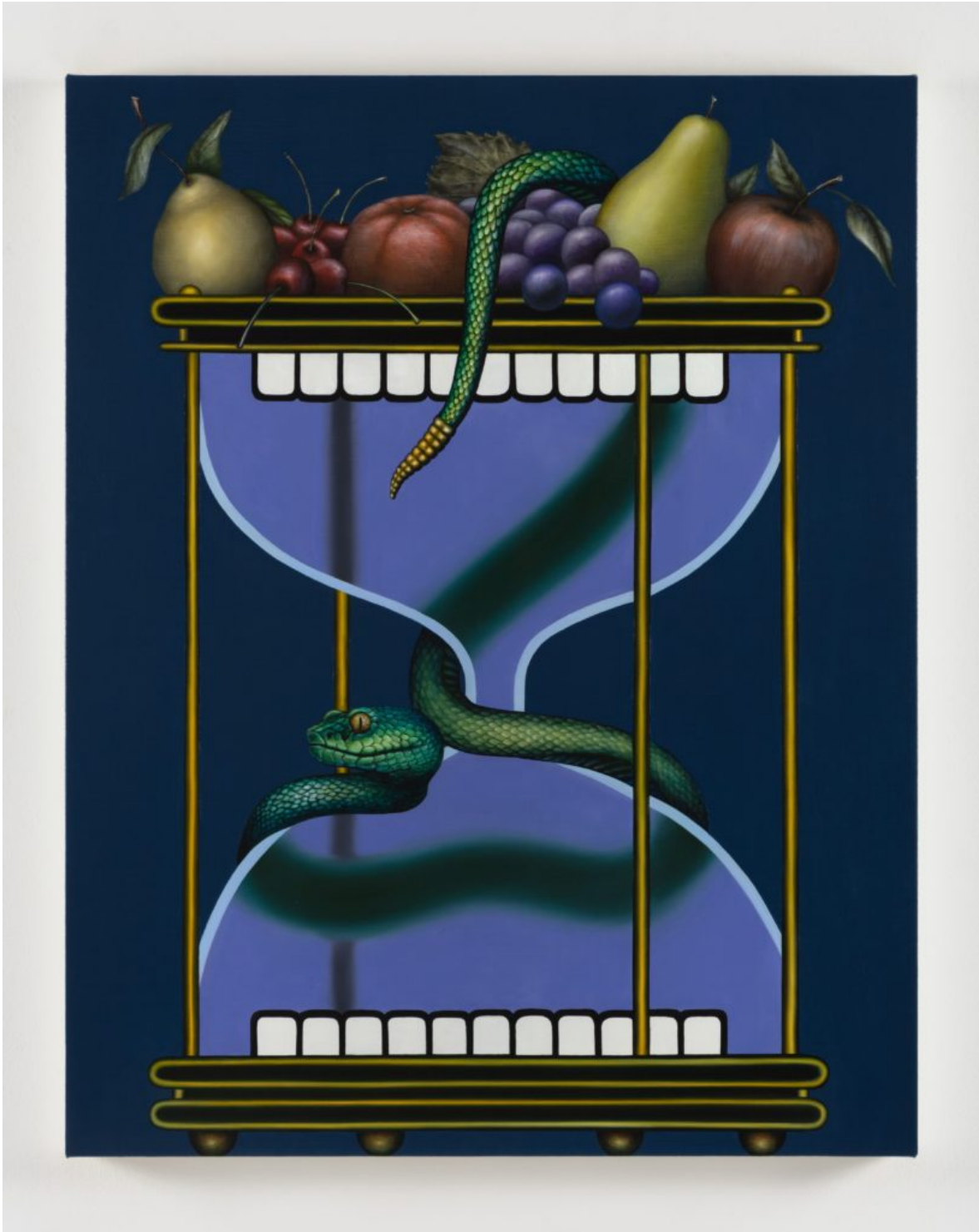
What It Looks Like:



Emily Mae Smith, *Gleaner Odalisque* (2019). Photo: Charles Benton. Courtesy the artist and Perrotin.



Emily Mae Smith, *The Green Blade Spins Their Flesh to Ore* (2019). Photo: Charles Benton.
Courtesy the artist and Perrotin.



Emily Mae Smith, *Temptation Island* (2019). Photo: Charles Benton. Courtesy the artist and Perrotin.



Installation view, “Emily Mae Smith: Avalon” at Perrotin Tokyo. Photo: Maiko Miyagawa, courtesy the artist and Perrotin.





Emily Mae Smith, *Heretic Lace* (2019). Photo: Charles Benton. Courtesy the artist and Perrotin.



Installation view, “Emily Mae Smith: Avalon” at Perrotin Tokyo. Photo: Maiko Miyagawa, courtesy the artist and Perrotin.



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