

The New York Times

What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries Right Now



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By **Martha Schwendener, John Vincler and Seph Rodney**

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Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Start in Chelsea to see 56 paintings by Matthew Wong, the extraordinary young Canadian painter who died in 2019. Also in the neighborhood is Dan Voinea's exquisite oil paintings. And don't miss Mona Chalabi's installation at the Brooklyn Museum.

Newly Reviewed

Summer hours vary at galleries. Visitors should check in advance.

CHELSEA

Matthew Wong

Through Sept. 10. Cheim & Read, 547 West 25th Street, Manhattan. [212-242-7727](tel:212-242-7727);
cheimread.com.



Matthew Wong's "The Family," in the exhibition "The New World, Paintings From Los Angeles 2016." Matthew Wong Foundation/Artist's Rights Society (ARS), New York; via Cheim & Read

The Canadian painter Matthew Wong died by suicide in [2019](#) at the age of 35, leaving behind an extraordinary cache of paintings and ink drawings. “The New World, Paintings From Los Angeles 2016” at Cheim & Read’s Chelsea location is packed with 56 paintings that offer distinct world views, often dark but filled with gentle and profound encounters with the natural world.

In “Bather and Turtle” (all works are from 2016) a peachy-pink human figure crouches over a bright green turtle, the human’s back echoing the curve of the turtle’s shell. “The Family” includes three purple figures in a landscape reminiscent of Matisse or Bonnard, while “The Gaze” captures grimacing figures looking into hand-held mirrors. In other works, a nude bathes under a lightning storm or people contemplate the vagaries of a forest or puddle.

Largely self-taught, Wong learned from art history books. His work resounds with the vivid colors and ethos of early modernist paintings from the Fauves and Expressionists to one-person movements like Edvard Munch, [Albert Pinkham Ryder](#) or [Forrest Bess](#) — as well as traditional Chinese landscape painting. Bucolic, pastoral and erotic, many of those painters were struggling with the effects of industrialization on both the landscape and human psyche. Wong found in painting — and their example — a potent tool for translating his experience and depicting the baffling, distressing and beautiful world around us. *MARTHA SCHWENDENER*