

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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The New York Times

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

By **Roberta Smith, John Vincler, Max Lakin, Travis Diehl and Seph Rodney**

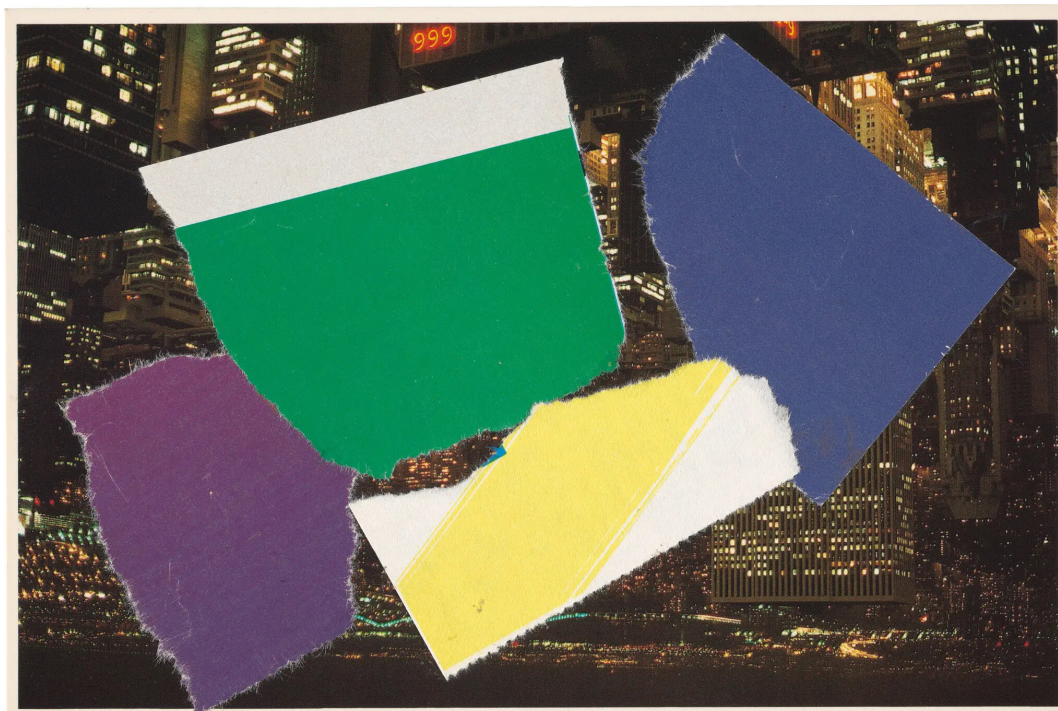
June 8, 2022

Want to see new art in New York this weekend? Start in the Upper East Side with Frank Diaz Escalet's rich flat paintings of musicians. Then head to Chelsea to see Ellsworth Kelly's colorful, collaged works at Matthew Marks. And don't miss Elizabeth Englander's strange and strangely affecting sculptures of dismembered nutcrackers in TriBeCa.

CHELSEA

Ellsworth Kelly

Through June 25. Matthew Marks Gallery, 526 West 22nd Street, Manhattan. 212-243-0200, matthewmarks.com.



Ellsworth Kelly's "Manhattan Skyline at Night" (1985), collage on postcard, at Matthew Marks Gallery. Ellsworth Kelly Foundation and Matthew Marks Gallery

Vincler, John. "What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries Right Now: Ellsworth Kelly." *The New York Times*, June 8, 2022.

Ellsworth Kelly's art often feels like a platonic ideal of shape and color rather than the work of human hands. There's an immaculate presentation of five works, lit only by skylights, now on view at 522 West 22nd Street (which continues at 523 West 24th Street) in "Blue Green Black Red." But it's the exhibition "Postcards" next door at 526, that was a revelation precisely because the artworks are imperfect yet personal.

Purple, green, blue and yellow, in rough rectangles of printed ephemera, have been glued to the surface of a postcard of illuminated skyscrapers in "Manhattan Skyline at Night" (1985). The series of colors fits loosely with his visual style, but the nonchalance of the placement, the mix of torn and cut edges seems antithetical to his characteristic rigor. In others, fruit or fragments of bodies are overlaid onto the postcard's landscape images. On view are 17 of the nearly 400 known examples of the artist's collaged (and mailed) works.

After settling in New York in 1954 from his G.I. Bill stint in France, Kelly worked in the evenings sorting mail at the central post office in Manhattan, and soon befriended the patron saint of mail-art, Ray Johnson. Kelly (1923-2015) sustained his postcard practice across five decades from the earliest here, "Statue of Liberty" (1957) — a woman's bare leg pasted over most of the sculpture — to the latest, "Basel III" (1992). These intuitive collages made me see the coolly perfect companion works next door as if for the first time. *JOHN VINCLER*