ALMINE RECH

Heather Day
Hourglass

Nov 7 — Dec 19, 2025 | New York

Almine Rech New York, Tribeca is pleased to present 'Hourglass,' Heather Day's second solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from November 7 to December 19, 2025.

Heather Day's paintings are indexes of time. These static objects are containers for ephemeral movement and gesture, for emergence and entropy, for chaos and control. They are repositories of feeling and essays of inquiry and reflection.

Day's paintings carry their information primarily in the form of color, often transposed from the fleeting atmospheric effects of the rising and setting sun over the southern Mojave Desert where Day lives and works. Large windows frame views from her studio onto the creosote and sagebrush that recedes towards boulder-strewn hills on the horizon. This landscape is a dusty ground for vivid celestial lightshows, which bathe it daily in subtly attenuated gradients of color.

In turn, the earth responds to the sun, most apparently through the plants and flowers that depend upon its light and, as if in supplication, mimic the colors of sunrise and sunset. During summers spent on the Oregon coast, Day has observed the seasonal blooms of pink, purple, blue, yellow and orange flowers that appear near the area's rocky cliffs and beaches and has emulated these colors in her painting palette.

Day's process involves the application of washes of wet acrylic paint onto stretched canvases, usually much larger than her finished paintings. Using rags and wide brushes—as well as by pouring paint directly onto the canvas—Day coaxes pigment into drifts and veils that interact unpredictably as they dry. In the gusty high desert, with its typically low humidity and high temperatures, paint dries much faster than it would elsewhere, impressing on Day's process an urgency and a special awareness of the implacable passing of time.

The second distinct phase of Day's process entails the editing and collaging of sections of painted canvas, which she stitches together into composite arrangements. Before slicing into her canvases, however, she uses digital tools to help settle on the optimal combinations of color and form. This introduction of digitality complicates the temporalities essential to Day's paintings in a profound way. The existential problem and transcendent truth at the heart of her work—the irreversibility of the passing of time—is lifted in digital space, where changes can be undone and breakages healed. Cutting and pasting on screen is infinitely mutable. Though unseen by the viewer, the specter of the digital haunts Day's decidedly analog and physical paintings, which, through their tactile materiality, are subject to the same laws of physics as our own bodies.

The geometries in Day's latest body of work are ostensibly rationalist, dividing the rectangular canvas into halves, quarters, and triangular sectors. Colors appear and reappear across discontinuous sections, but there is no obvious sense of sequence or spatial hierarchy in these works. No beginning and no end, no above and beneath, no hierarchy, no prescribed journey that the eye must take to "read" the canvas. The colors—and implicitly, their corresponding moments in time, now archived—are configured anew, presented all at once.

The hourglass, the titular motif of this exhibition and a form subtly alluded to in certain of Day's triangular compositions, has no definitive orientation. Through gravity, sand falls from top to bottom, but it can only continue to fall when the object is reversed. The hourglass is a rigid container of rushing sand, its metaphorical significance activated only by its rotation. Similarly, Day's paintings in this series—especially those arranged around central points – seem to rotate kaleidoscopically, relinquishing gravity and turning like the stars in the Milky Way.

— Jonathan Griffin, writer, critic, and curator.