

Meliksetian MB Briggs

Contemporary
Art Review

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Back to the Shack at Meliksetian | Briggs

September 12, 2017
Text by Catherine Wagley



Back to the Shack (Installation View). Image courtesy of Meliksetian | Briggs.

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“Destiny and doom, both are ringing like potential golden bells throughout our open minds as viewers,” reads the letter-as-press-release for *Back to the Shack* at Meliksetian | Briggs.

Scholar Steffen Krüger wrote the press release and his colleague André Butzer—the “widely unknown expressionistic painter [...] from Germany,” Krüger calls him, positioning eccentricity over importance—curated the show. It’s full, with work by 27 artists; impressive given the intimate size of Meliksetian | Briggs’ storefront space. On the walls, work seems intuitively, if not impulsively, placed. Butzer is an author with lots of ideas—he groups works in divergent categories, like “Catholicism,” “Matisse” and “Disney.” Looking feels like spending time with a friend whose wheels spin fast in every direction.

A chandelier by Björn Dahlem descends from the ceiling; 2X4s with lamps on them extending precariously. Lisa Seebach’s *Dark Forest (The End)* (2017), the only floor work in the exhibition, resembles a spider, with long, black steel legs standing on ceramic leaves. The exhibition’s walls are labeled in pencil: The “Walter Disney” wall includes Brett Lund’s two romantic, black and white Rorschach photographs of rock faces. Beneath the rocks hangs John Newsom’s painting, *Harbor in the Tempest* (2014), of a crisply rendered tiger surrounded by red triangles and expressive dots and strokes. On the “Paul Celan” wall, the name of the very serious poet is scrawled at an angle and letters look to be falling toward the floor. Right above Celan’s name hang a suite of works so poetically-composed as to be comical: Ryan Muller’s photograph of rough, outstretched hands hang next to Josef Zekoff’s, *Ohne Titel (Vessel)* (2017), a half open, crudely-drawn, reddish oval.

Back to the Shack is a reminder that those things that make the “summer group show” a dreaded entity—e.g., overwrought theses imposed on work pulled from a gallery’s inventory or the secondary market—are ultimately unnecessary, cynical ways to use the vacation season to offload market leftovers. Refreshingly here, the group show is mostly about the possibilities of a group. What results when you put a lot of artists together and try to make sense: in the case of this show, a cacophonous but friendly cornucopia of sensations.

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***Back to the Shack* runs August 25–October 14, 2017 at [Meliksetian | Briggs](#) (313 N. Fairfax Avenue, West Hollywood, CA 90036).**



***Back to the Shack* (Installation View).
Image courtesy of Meliksetian | Briggs.**

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**Daniel Mendel-Black, Untitled (2017).
Acrylic and oil
on decorative mat board on wood
panel, 24 x 18 inches. Image
courtesy of the artist and Meliksetian | Briggs.**

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Marcel Hüppauff, *Untitled* (2017). Oil on canvas, 35 x 29 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Meliksetian | Briggs.

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Ulrich Wulff, *SHORT STORY*
(2015). Oil on canvas, 19.75
x 15.75 inches. Image courtesy of
the artist and
Meliksetian | Briggs.

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**Björn Dahlem, *Black Hole*
(*Sagittarius A* Minor*) (2017).
Woods, lamps, and chandelier,
126 x 98.375 x 106.25 inches.
Image courtesy of the artist and
Meliksetian | Briggs.**

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André Butzer, *Untitled* (2017).
Acrylic on canvas, 28 x 20
inches. Image courtesy of the
artist and Meliksetian | Briggs.

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***Back to the Shack* (Installation View). Image courtesy of Meliksetian | Briggs.**

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Lisa Seebach, *Dark Forest (The End)* (2017). Glazed ceramic and steel, 64 x 55 x 40 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Meliksetian | Briggs.