

The New York Times

ART REVIEWS

New York Galleries: What to See Right Now

Gina Beavers

Through Sept. 2 at MoMA PS1;
22-25 Jackson Avenue, Long Island
City, 718-784-2084, momaps1.org.

Gina Beavers's sculptural paintings are too much. Caked with multiple layers of acrylic paint, they can look like earnest art projects more than bona fide art. However, this survey, "The Life I Deserve" at MoMA PS1 shows Ms. Beavers honing her idiosyncratic aesthetic that translates images into high-relief objects, offering canny statements on contemporary bodies, beauty and culture.

Ms. Beavers begins with pictures borrowed from social media and the internet and remakes them in a very material way: extreme manicures, makeup tutorials and foods simulating body parts. A painting of a body-shaped cake with a slice removed from the buttocks is reminiscent of Wayne Thiebaud's Pop canvases of pastries and cakes, which equated food (or frosting) with painting and consuming art with eating — but amped up to 21st-century internet grotesqueness.

The best-known historical example of a work famous primarily for its excessive paint application is Jay DeFeo's "The Rose" (1958-66), a near-abstract canvas that weighs nearly a ton. The work hovers on the edge of being gimmicky, relying on the shock-value of paint accretion. Like Ms. DeFeo's project, the result of a seven-year devotion, however, Ms. Beavers's works tackle the weirdness of immaterial images floating through the ether, building them up into something monumental, rather than dismissing them, as most of us do.

MARTHA SCHWENDENER



Gina Beavers's "Who Has Braces?" (2014) in her show "The Life I Deserve" at MoMA PS1