

IMPULSE

REVIEW MAY 6 - WRITTEN BY ROBERT CURCIO

Review: “Sehnsucht (Longing)” at YveYANG Gallery



Yves Scherer, Imagine (Kate Beach White Flower), 2025, archival print, acrylic glass, lenticular lens, and Dibond in oak frame with glass. 64 3/8 x 48 3/8 in (framed). Courtesy the artist and YveYANG Gallery.

Located at the end of Wooster Street in Soho, NYC, is YveYANG Gallery which I have been quietly following since their opening in 2017. The current exhibit, *Sehnsucht (Longing)* is an unexpected pleasure, leaving you lost in thought and reflection not only of the exhibit but also of yourself and the reality of the space through which you are currently wandering.

Originally explored by C. J. Lewis and Sigmund Freud, the German concept of *Sehnsucht*, at its basic idea, is a complex mix of longing, yearning, and craving for something unattainable or ideal—a faded memory that you wish to relive, or perhaps a path not chosen. It is something we all have experienced, probably not fully understood, and wistfully dreamed of until daily life rudely snapped us back to cold reality.

The curators, *Stavroula Couliandis* and Yve Yang, brought together artists Zoë Buckman, Curtis Kulig, Alissa Ritter, Yves Scherer, and Sofie Schnellbach, five artists that I am excited to learn more about and share what I saw at the exhibit. They did an excellent job of placing the works individually and in response to each other, although I wish the space had been given more consideration in the curation.



Sofie Schnellbach, *Revenge Sleep*, 2024, oil and acrylics on canvas, 13 x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. Courtesy the artist and YveYANG Gallery.

The exhibit begins with Yves Scherer's lenticular lens photograph, *Imagine (Kate Beach White Flower)*, of a young woman on a beach (that's Kate Moss, remember her?) with a beautiful white orchid. Scherer is playing with advertising 101, creating a sense of mystery and desire, which we all get pulled into and pay dearly for. While standing there, I started pining for all those memories on the sunlit beach when I was a kid, until I bumped into the communal office desk behind me.

Navigating around the big desk to get a better look at Sofie Schnellbach's painting *Revenge Sleep* (2024), an intriguing small work painted in mostly a monochromatic palette with just a hint of color here and there. The most legible image is a hand that could either be waving or trying to grasp that white, viscous entity vaguely outlined, or maybe it is letting go, rather perplexing.

As you walk through a narrow, short hallway, look down towards the right and have a little laugh. There, just a couple of inches off the floor, hangs Curtis Kulig's playful painting, *Untitled* (2024), of a group of snowmen. Keep looking and you will see one of Yves Scherer's little ceramic flowers, *Imagine* (2025), on the floor facing the painting. It's these little moments of *Sehnsucht*, by yourself or in a crowd, which capture you off guard and evoke snippets of memory.

Entering the main space with its refinished glistening floor, pristine white walls, soaring ceilings, and bright lights, one finds Alissa Ritter's *Love, Treats and Power Play (dogs)*—15 tinted fiberglass dog heads of all the same dog, at the same height (perfect for petting), and of same distance from each other. The installation warps 1980s Neo-Geo art's commentary on consumerism with a dream of a pet in various designer colors. On the other side are Zoë Buckman's text and image works on vintage textiles of dollies, clothing, and other remnants. Buckman's hand embroidery and use of the textiles are brilliantly juxtaposed by collages of snakes and some harsh handwritten words. You sense delicateness, warmth, and vulnerability with a homey feel, but possibly that idyllic past isn't what it seems like, as the words imply.



Alissa Ritter, *Love, Treats and Power Play (dogs)*, 2024, 15 tinted fiberglass, 5 ½ x 5 ½ x 4 3/8 in each, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and YveYANG Gallery.

There is a back room easily accessible, but you're a bit hesitant to enter. Right at the entrance you notice a well-defined line where on the other side the floor is old and worn, the walls are timeworn wood slats painted a light gray, the back wall has a row of old windows with a sizable antiquated industrial exhaust fan, and a skylight letting the world in, all making for a discernable shift when passing into the back space.

Against the back wall and spreading across the space is a field of Scherer's ceramic flowers. Once again, Kulig's paintings of flowers and animals hang at various heights, interacting with the viewer to create a semblance of a bucolic field to lie down, to look up beyond the skylight, and to daydream. As you leave the room, there are two of Sofie Schnellbach's paintings, *Tower* and *Aftercare (UTOPIA)*, dark and dreamy, each near an exit and on a cool grey wall. The backroom is where the concept of *Sehnsucht* and the exhibit offer endless possibilities.

Sehnsucht (Longing) was on view at YveYANG Gallery from March 7th to April 26th, 2025. The exhibition featured the work of Zoë Buckman, Curtis Kulig, Alissa Ritter, Yves Scherer, and Sofie Schnellbach.



Zoë Buckman, *slow dancing white embossed ovals through my veins*, 2020, vintage textile, collage, ink on paper. 13 x 18 ½ in (paper), 21 x 27 ¾ in (framed). Courtesy the artist and YveYANG Gallery.



Backroom, Sehnsucht (Longing). Left: Sofie Schnellbach, *Aftercare (UTOPIA)*, 2024, oil, acrylic, digital print, fabric, and paper on canvas. 7 ⅛ x 10 in. Mid wall: Curtis Kulig, *Beautiful Boulevard*, 2025, oil on linen, 16 x 20 in. Floor: Yves Scherer, *Imagine*, 2025, glazed ceramics, 4 x 1 x 1 in. Low wall: Curtis Kulig, *I made a fortune (in the intellect)*, 2025. Oil on linen 14 x 18 in. Courtesy the artists and YveYANG Gallery.