What to See in N.Y.C. Galleries in May

Want to see new art in the city? Don't miss Pierre Bonnard on the Upper East Side, Uman and Beverly Fishman in Chelsea and Sylvia Plimack Mangold in TriBeCa.

CHELSEA

Beverly Fishman

Through June 3. Miles McEnery Gallery, 515 West 22nd Street, Manhattan; 212-445-0051; milesmcenery.com

The artist Beverly Fishman has been thinking about the cure for what ails us for the last 40 years. Her candy-colored constructions exist somewhere between painting, sculpture and bad trip: uppers and downers pulsating in happy, fluorescent hues — a medicine cabinet stocked with remedies for being human.

The new work here, continuing her series of faceted, urethane-shellacked wood forms that protrude from the wall (a funny play on the idea of "relief"), are a workaround to figuration — about the body but never depicting it, geometric abstraction as a feint to talk about contemporary culture, and what we ingest to cope with it. They merge Frank Stella's hard-edged syncopation with Southern California's Finish Fetish movement, resulting in lustrous surfaces with an electric hum and smooth cast, like Everlasting Gobstoppers dipped in car paint. Each pill is rendered in concentric bands so that they resemble restless, polychromatic irises, or Wayne Thiebaud's glowing confections, if Thiebaud painted sherbert-ringed icons of existential pain.

Only their titles, doubling as diagnoses, reveal their nefariousness, as in "Untitled (Osteoporosis, Abortion, Depression, Anxiety, Birth Control)," 2023: healing as dictated by the medical-industrial complex, the promise of a quick fix and the drug dependency that promise has encouraged.

"Four help you through the night, help to minimize your plight," Mick Jagger sings on "Mother's Little Helper," the Stones' buoyant tune about a bored housewife developing a Valium habit. Since then, the pharmacological spectrum has only become more florid. That gives Fishman an inexhaustible pill box, her dosages calibrated to symptoms that never let up. *MAX LAKIN*