



As the Fog settled over SF, some asked, ‘Where’s the art?’

Charles Desmarais | January 23, 2019



Diana Al-Hadid’s free standing sculpture “By Cover of Night” (2018) at Berggruen Gallery
(Photo by Johnna Arnold and Glen Cheriton)

Berggruen Gallery’s invigorating exhibition of free-standing sculptures, wall works and drawings by Diana Al-Hadid looks complete unto itself, encompassing a dozen objects of domestic scale or somewhat larger. That’s appropriate to the gallery space and to the work’s prospective market.

It is useful to know, however, about the much larger sculptural installations she has produced, for example, at San Jose Museum of Art in 2017, or her major public work, the six-structure “Delirious Matter,” spread across New York’s Madison Square Park last year.

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But Al-Hadid works big even when the results don't spread across a museum gallery or a public park. "Temperamental Nature," at Berggruen through Feb. 16, packs tons of formal and intellectual density into sculptures that seem formed from liquid color, and three-dimensional panels that hang like layered paintings on the walls.



Diana Al-Hadid "Volcanic Split" (2015) at Berggruen Gallery
(Photo by Johnna Arnold and Glen Cheriton)

I like the paintings best, though they are the hardest to describe whether verbally or in a photograph. They are ingeniously turned in on themselves, with interior colors and forms visible through apertures in the surface, and they describe grand, if indistinct, vistas. Some suggest figures, drawn upon Old Master models, lost in the haze of memory and history.