

Art in Review

Cheryl Donegan

Luxury Dust

*Oliver Kamm/5BE Gallery
621 West 27th Street, Chelsea
Through Oct. 6*

Cheryl Donegan can't be accused of pandering. Her videos often receive plaudits, but her paintings get less favorable reactions. Here she forges ahead with painting, no video in sight.

Ms. Donegan has references to painting in her videos, and she is impeccably informed on the current language of the medium. These works have a deliberate, down-at-the-heels look. Most are painted on corrugated cardboard with water-based oils in what looks like a temporary, sketched application.

The majority are abstract. A few have silhouettes of people wielding baseball bats, or perhaps flags or scythes. Black-and-white works make you question whether you are looking at positive or negative space. These are interspersed with prismatic com-

positions painted in bad-taste colors like peach, lime green and DayGlo orange. A couple of paintings titled "Luxury Dust" are made with lacerated silver or gold tape over cardboard.

Presentation has been carefully considered. Vivid fluorescent lighting has been installed in the gallery, replacing warm, incandescent lighting. The paintings are hung in suitably casual — which means, of course, carefully considered — groupings.

The show is complemented by a gallery release in the form of a disjointed prose poem by Kim Rosenfield, composed of what read like found fragments from vintage advice columns for housewives and shopping catalog entries.

But has Ms. Donegan's painting practice risen to the level of her video work? Unfortunately no. She applies the same provocative approach in both mediums, but the videos with their whip-smart wit and intelligence still prevail.

MARTHA SCHWENDENER