

## Halpern's latest photo experiments are still punchy.

By Nana Asfour Tue Oct 4 2011



Tamar Halpern, *Untitled*  
Photograph: Courtesy the artist and D'Amelio; Terras; New York

### Time Out Ratings :

Working in the vein of other young female artists who mess about with photographic processes (Sara Greenberger Rafferty and Mariah Robertson come to mind), Tamar Halpern creates intricate photo compositions using a dizzying modus operandi of photographing, printing, scanning, digitally altering, splashing, sponging, wiping, taping and printing again. The works she exhibited last year at this same gallery were unruly and unhinged—and eloquent. Her latest efforts evince a more tempered, yet still effective, approach. Her current exhibition includes gelatin silver prints of such banal subjects as a cat, a battered pair flip-flops and a self-portrait of the artist holding a stained piece of cardboard. These are interspersed with larger black-and-white images divided into sections, and smeared with hot pink ink. The latter follow Halpern's previous disdain for boundaries, as well as her penchant for dense layering, but unlike the artist's earlier works, which were about vandalizing their source imagery, these latest pieces are too obsequious toward the building-block photograph. The results, while impressive, are less dynamic. (Though oddly, this group's standout is also the least defaced: a large printout of an inverted car, half doused in runny pink, that's surprisingly punchy.)

Further afield, three 90-by-70 inch panels using a streetscape as their point of departure command an entire wall. The thematic color is magenta, and the results are quite assured. But they are outshone by a more brutally disfigured neighbor—a black print with an orange border, bleached in the middle, as if it had been splattered with acid; it spookily resembles an aged photograph of a ghost. Still, though works like this one may have left me pining for Halpern's earlier desecrations, her virtuosic experimentations keep the viewer avidly tuned in.