

# ARTFORUM



View of “Stabler Horizon.”

COLOGNE

**Whitney Claflin, Rochelle Feinstein**

DREI

Juelicher Strasse 14  
April 28–July 16, 2022

There was a strange solace in visiting Whitney Claflin and Rochelle Feinstein’s duo show on the Fourth of July. As the United States’ tragic devolution has ramped up in recent weeks, it felt apt to spend the country’s Independence Day amidst these New York-based artists enduring engagement—personal and political, abstract and hyper-specific—with living in America. Feinstein stitched worming lines

of hand-dyed, rainbow yarn into a group of drop cloth paintings that include *American Sampler / 2020* (all works 2022), in which she uses the threads to trace the contours of a puzzle of light-washed red and blue state-like shapes. The stops and starts of colorful embroidery are garish and hopeful, like a last-ditch attempt to metaphorically heal the nation. Claflin’s *Chore Chart* renders a box of Jiffy brand corn muffin mix in oil, ink, and pencil on canvas. This emblem of Americana is at once monument and riddle, blurring lines between commemoration and critique.

Both artists’ works are primarily concerned with painting, whether by muddling its materiality, as in Claflin’s *The Worst TV I Have Ever Owned*, or by confronting its weighty legacies with wonky grids, as in Feinstein’s *Sequel*. Claflin was Feinstein’s student just over a decade ago and adopted her teacher’s polyphonic approach to artmaking. Both artists cast their net widely in terms of what can compel and constitute a work. Here, Feinstein showed a mobile of laminated Polaroids alongside drooping drop cloth paintings that were tacked to the wall, while Claflin’s wispy, scraggly line traversed a diverse group of small oil paintings, a disco ball sculpture, and an ink drawing of a waifish creature holding a placard declaring “neither behemoth.” There was a sense that all the mess that is life, politics, and paint was up for grabs, jumbled into a tenuous cohesion—not order or resolution, but something like meaning.

—Camila McHugh