

THE NEW YORKER

NOVEMBER 26, 2018

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN: DIKE BLAIR

by Peter Schjeldahl

Blair has been painting coolly beautiful little still-lives of ordinary things in ordinary places for so long that, by now, they seem almost to paint themselves, for their own enjoyment. A pink cocktail luxuriates in a stemmed glass, never mind the somewhat gawky foreshortening of the tabletop that it shares with a cloth napkin and a bowl of nuts. Spatters of paint on a cement floor get a kick out of suggesting a frontal abstract painting, while still knowing perfectly well what they are. A yellow line and the shadow of a car bumper on a parking lot, water in a swimming pool, a torn-open FedEx envelope near a window fan, Dunkin' Donuts coffee cups, and a nodding tulip in a vase on a nighttime windowsill become unwilled memories—the almost, but not quite, meaningless retention of the small, sticky epiphanies that bind us to life.