

# The New York Times

ART IN REVIEW

## Zoi Gaitanidou: 'Risk Aversion'

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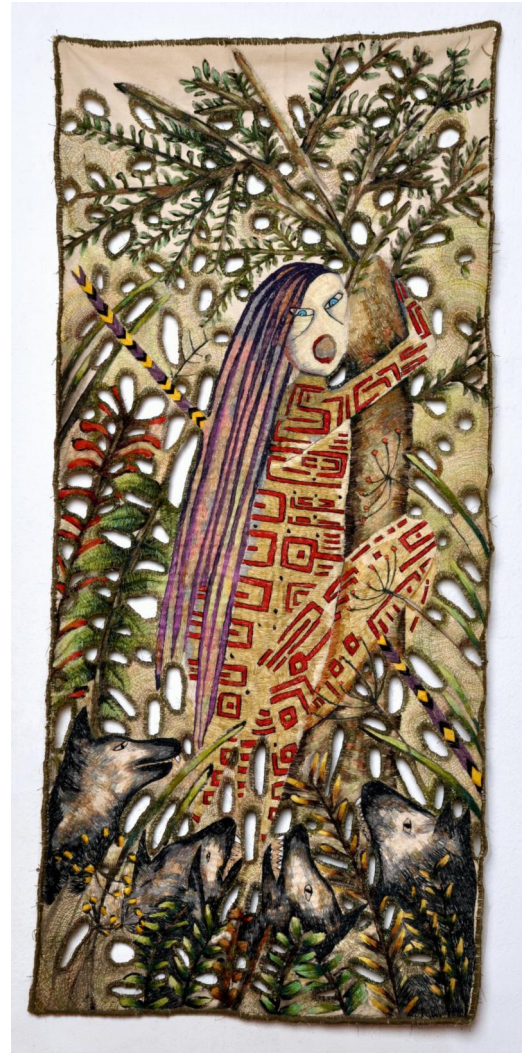
*Scaramouche Gallery  
52 Orchard Street,  
near Hester Street,  
Lower East Side*

*Through Oct. 27*

The New York debut of Zoi Gaitanidou, a Berlin-based Greek artist, has a definite bounce. Her paintings feature a tribe of gorgeous jungle-dwelling gamins with brightly painted faces and, often, bodies. They cavort in dense tropical foliage, investigate strange objects and occasionally dash for safety. In "Wrath," a fashionably attired, longhaired girl scrambles up a tree while a pack of wolves nips at her hem. The imagery is a skillful if somewhat familiar and naïve derivative of neo-Expressionism that also evokes a fashion illustrator's take on the tropical vision of Henri Rousseau.

But there are substantial saving graces: the vibrant color sense and some effective, serious physical eccentricities. First of all, Ms. Gaitanidou uses unstretched canvas dotted with elliptical perforations; the paintings hang on the wall a bit like hides. More important, after initially sketching in her scenes in paint, she renders them in an energetic free-form embroidery, with long stitches that build to a dense tapestrylike softness or span barer stretches of canvas with spidery networks that resemble drawing. The perforations are also edged in stitching. The effect is crazed, especially up close.

Right now, Ms. Gaitanidou's handling of her materials and the resulting surfaces (and colors) are livelier and more original than what she depicts. But if her images can lose some of their cuteness and finish and become as wild as her stitching, she could very well become a contender.



Scaramouche NY

Zoi Gaitanidou's "Wrath" (2013), a work of acrylic and thread on cotton, in her solo show "Risk Aversion."