

KATi HECK

The brodo

15 November 2025 - 7 February 2026

Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to announce *The brodo*, the new solo show of Kati Heck. This is the sixth solo show of Heck since joining Tim Van Laere Gallery in 2011 and her first show in our Roman space. In *The brodo*, Heck continues her long-standing exploration of the transformative processes that bind human, social, and emotional life. Known for her virtuosic handling of paint and her ability to merge realism with absurdity, Heck constructs a world in which tenderness and grotesque humor coexist, constantly dissolving into one another. Her practice has always moved between the theatrical and the intimate, between the instinctive gesture and the meticulously staged tableau. Here, that dynamic takes the form of a metaphorical soup, a social and spiritual broth in which everything is connected and nothing remains stable.

A drawing/collage functions as the exhibition's abstract recipe, pairing a simple ladle with a written formula. Part instruction, part incantation, it distills Heck's practice into its most essential gesture: the act of mixing. The piece operates like a dadaist statement, binding intuition and absurdity within a single frame. It is as if the artist were revealing her own method: not a recipe to be followed, but a process of perpetual recombination, of letting the ingredients of experience simmer until something new emerges.

The Italian word *brodo* (meaning broth) serves both as metaphor and method. Heck imagines society as a collective mixture, a substance in continuous transformation, where each element, whether nourishing or corrosive, affects the whole. "You can place certain ingredients into a society that make things better or worse," she notes. "The show is about how you bring those ingredients together and make a good bouillon out of it." Her new works present these ingredients as visual and emotional fragments: friends and acquaintances making the broth, the animals, her daughter and herself. Each figure functions as both subject and symbol, a particle within the larger chemistry of life that Heck stirs together on canvas.

At the center of the exhibition stands a large painting depicting the people making the broth, the conceptual and visual core of the show. Its compositional rhythm and spiritual resonance draw directly from *Hans Memling's Concert of Angels (ca. 1480)*, a work that embodies the serene harmony of Northern Renaissance devotion. In Heck's reinterpretation, the angelic choir becomes a gathering of cooks, companions, and ingredients, a secular chorus devoted not to divine song but to the shared act of stirring, chopping, and tasting. The painting translates Memling's celestial order into a messy human symphony, where music becomes labor, and harmony is achieved through collective effort rather than divine grace. The result is a scene that is at once chaotic and reverent, a ritual of creation grounded in the everyday gestures of care, nourishment, and coexistence.

Heck's oeuvre introduces a whole new iconography with her own symbols and motives, that are closely related to today's society. Heck's world is one in which humor and transcendence are inseparable, and the domestic becomes a site of metaphysical inquiry. Her sculptural works extend this logic into material form. In one, a record player spins a monumental soup ladle, transforming an ordinary utensil into a rotating emblem of repetition and ritual; a choreography of domestic devotion. In another, a mound of horse manure rests delicately on a bed of eggs. The sculpture is both grotesque and tender: a meditation on energy, decay, and regeneration, where waste becomes a source of life.

Kati Heck (b. 1979, Düsseldorf) lives and works in Antwerp. Trained at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, she has developed a distinctive practice that bridges painting, performance, sculpture, and installation. Her works have been exhibited internationally and have been included in the collection of Center Pompidou, Paris (FR); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (USA); Hall Art Foundation, Derneburg (DE) and Reading (VT); Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris (FR); M HKA, Antwerp (BE); CAC, Málaga (ES); City of Antwerp (BE); The Rachofsky Collection, Dallas (USA); the Middelheim Museum, Antwerp (BE); Museum De Domijnen, Sittard (NL); Mu.ZEE, Ostend (BE); Municipal Museum of Contemporary Art (S.M.A.K.), Ghent (BE).