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Wilkin, Karen. "At the Galleries." *The Hudson Review*, vol. 70, no. 1, Spring 2017, p. 17.

Anyone who admired Katherine Bradford's 2016 exhibition at CANADA, "Fear of Waves," with its sometimes poetic, sometimes discomfiting meditations on the meeting of human beings and bodies of water, could savor six more of her large, roughly stroked canvases at Sperone Westwater last winter. Most were about the swimmers with whom she is obsessed, plus one vaguely sinister painting of an enormous bonfire surrounded by disconcertingly similar, minimally indicated but unmistakably female figures, and a wonderfully strange image of three figures trapped in vast ball gowns, rather like Winnie in her mound, in Samuel Beckett's *Happy Days*. Bradford is a master of unstable meanings. Her rosy swimmers first attract us with their quasi-naïve charm, but the longer we spend with them, the more we discover subtleties of drawing that animate the simplified figures; Matisse-like elongations and compressions, exaggerations and croppings, suggest movement and articulation. Similarly, while we first read Bradford's brushy expanses of saturated color as the surface of water, while also acknowledging them as the surface of the canvas, we soon begin to interpret them as suggesting boundless space. Bathers become voyagers traveling freely through the cosmos and then revert to being holiday-making swimmers once again. Bradford's implied narratives are ultimately impenetrable but compelling. We feel certain that we are faced with subtle metaphors without knowing precisely what those metaphors might signify. I've sometimes preferred her small paintings because of the intensity gained by the relatively large size of the brushmark in relation to the support, but both the CANADA show and the Sperone Westwater exhibit made it clear that Bradford is a painter to reckon with at any scale.