

ARTFORUM

Jackie Gendel

JEFF BAILEY GALLERY
625 West 27th Street
January 12–February 9

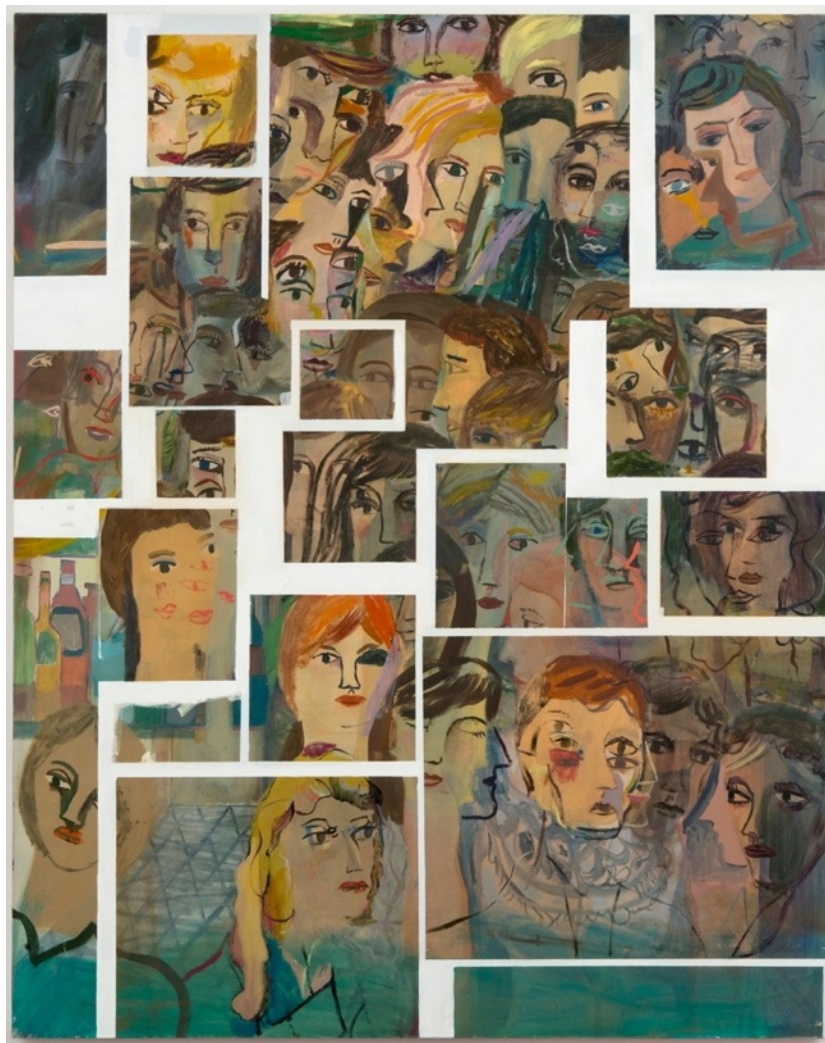
Jackie Gendel, *Party Line*, 2007–13, oil on canvas, 64 x 51”.

Jackie Gendel is currently having her second show at this space in three months. The first opened eleven days before Hurricane Sandy deposited half the Hudson River on the gallery district of West Chelsea, and while Gendel’s initial exhibition, “Comedy of Manners,” managed to remain intact, the artist decided to view the flood as an opportunity to create a largely new exhibition.

The reinstalled show, which includes a subterranean viewing room, is a commingling of new flood-inspired works and selections from the previous show. All of the images on display exude an almost carnivorous appetite for the canon of two-dimensional figuration, from the Neoplatonic works of the Renaissance to the obliterated representations of De Kooning. A clean-cut, dapper lad, the central character from *a-stare-in-the-crowd*,

2012, on first take appears to be an adroit shorthand version of a notable Max Beckmann self-portrait that comically reappears further into the gallery in *The Carried Man* 2012. This time, the said figure is on its side as a large, inauspicious idol being hauled off into the dusty tomes of history by a battalion of bare-skinned youths.

Such dispersion is the nature of Gendel’s output, which blends the impudent draftsmanship and audacious color of the Fauvists with a knack for caricature akin to *New Yorker* cartoonist Rea Irvin. *Twilight in the Idyll*, 2012, is a dazzling exemplar of Gendel’s command of resonance through abstraction. AbEx-inspired splatters and brushmarks piece together an early evening landscape, inhabited by generalized and gestural representations of classically posed figures. Are these youths in languor modeled after the rogues of Manet’s *Déjeuner* or Raphael’s master study that it references? Perhaps it is more an invocation of Klimt’s *Symbolist Idylle*, 1884—or does it swim in the same conceit of utopian youth as the work of artistic peer Justine Kurland? The answer is yes, and then some, proving that even if there are no new stories, there are always new storytellers.



— Ryan E. Steadman