

MOTI HASSON GALLERY is very pleased to announce the opening of **DOES SHE KNOW?**, a solo exhibition of paintings by **JACKIE GENDEL** that takes place from **MAY 8-JUNE 29, 2008**. Please join us for the **OPENING RECEPTION ON THURSDAY, MAY 8, FROM 6-8 PM**.

Jackie Gendel's new paintings present contemporary interpretations of cosmopolitan dramas. Providing a whimsical take on portrait painting, Gendel's work begs the question, both to her subjects and to viewers alike, "Does she know?". With a humorous and malleable relationship to the answer, Gendel explores the unseen and informational characteristics that define conventional portraiture. A painterly mélange of historical facts, social clues and simple narrative details coalesce with pictorial abstraction to give her portraits their currency as objects of speculation. The poetics of silence, gossip, and hearsay all play key roles in the formulation of her artistic syntax; *Does She Know?* plays with the phenomena of secrecy and storytelling through the process of painting.

Gendel's irreverence extends to her fictional sitters. All of her subjects display different qualities of interiority and varying degrees of self-awareness, with some more conscious than others as to the novelty of their environments. This is complicated in part by Gendel, who renders facial features like eyes and lips in multiple or uses them to merge personages presented frontally and in silhouette. Many of her figures have wandering glances and display expressions that betray cringe-worthy social tensions. The result? Subjects that are presented as "chameleons who can't make up their minds what gender, setting, or century they inhabit" (*The New Yorker*, 2006).

As such, Gendel's work recalls a range of influences, from 1950's fashion illustration to significant modern painters like Marie Laurencin (1883-1956), Charlotte Solomon (1917-1943), and Florine Stettheimer (1871-1944), whose female portraits similarly characterized and questioned how the canvas perimeter served both as a means of contextualization and subjugation.

Gendel herself has stated, "It's sort of like Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928). As I work through a painting, I watch as the figures change origin, class and gender, or psychological states. One mark can make a cold personality warm, or turn what might first appear as a wig from the 17th century into a haircut from the 1970s." Yet, in creating her nuanced characters, Gendel neither identifies with her subjects nor wishes to inhabit the worlds she creates. Unlike many of her contemporaries, her obsessively painted and repainted canvases exist in constant formation and rejection of identity. Instead, *Does She Know?* shows how Gendel's paintings channel her views on the increasing complexity of social roles while challenging the presumptive condition of portraiture.

JACKIE GENDEL received her Master of Arts from Yale University in 1998. Gendel has had solo exhibitions at CTRL Gallery (Houston, 2007); Jeff Bailey Gallery (New York, 2006); Mixture Contemporary (Houston, 2002, 2004); and Jessica Murray Projects (Brooklyn, 2003), as well as group exhibitions at Monya Rowe Gallery (New York, 2007); Bucket Rider (Chicago, 2007); Artist's Space (New York, 2005); Bellwether (New York, 2002); and White Columns (New York, 2002) among others. She was selected as

an artist in residence at the University of Tennessee (2008); The Atlantic Center for the Arts (2005); and The MacDowell Colony (2004, 2005); and was recently presented with an Academy Award for Art by the American Academy of Arts and Letters (2007). Her works belong to many prestigious public and private collections including the Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art and The Progressive Collection, and have been featured in such publications as *Art in America*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Sun*, and *The New York Times*. Gendel lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.