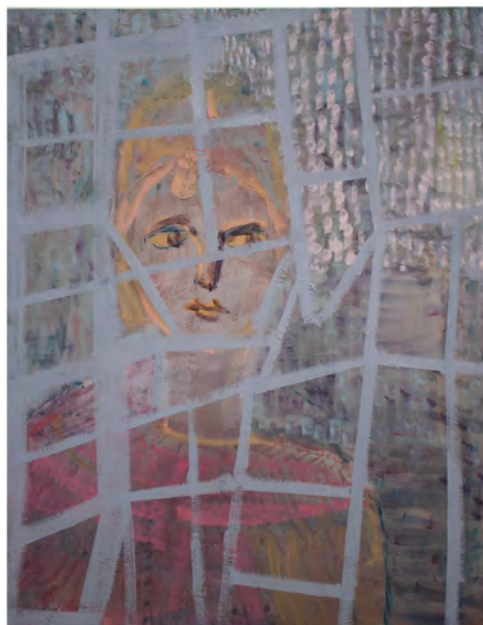


# Thomas Erben Gallery



## **Jackie Gendel - Dona Nelson**

Art Basel Miami Beach  
Art Nova, N15  
December 7 - 10, 2017

# Thomas Erben Gallery

## Description:

Though arrived at from different historical contexts, both Gendel and Nelson's work is characterized by a simultaneous and overlapping plurality of styles. This variation in style constitutes both the visual and the conceptual framework of our presentation. Ideally installed in a corner booth with only two walls, our NOVA show will feature two of Nelson's new freestanding works in which she has attached canvases to a square base, a medium sized painting by Gendel on the first wall, and a grid of Gendel's framed works on paper hung on the second.

The artists' stylistic variety is intertwined with the diverse applications of feminism to artistic practice. Gendel's painting project can be understood as an attempt to reclaim femininity. Groups of women are an iconic motif in her work, and are frequently seen walking arm in arm – evoking cliques, human chains, or marching Suffragettes. Whereas Gendel's works can be linked to artists like Florine Stettheimer or the Cubist-spawned movements that include Sonia Delaunay, Nelson's work evokes the second-wave feminist practices that sought equal standing with the male American painters of the 1940s and 50s.

Nelson's career began with poured, abstract paintings in the '70s, after which she turned to figuration in the early '80s, a transition which became more materially invested over time. Widening the scope of her materials as well as processes, her work became again more abstract during the '90s with the artist defining herself as an image maker defying the dichotomy of figuration and abstraction. Her formal inventiveness took another turn in the early 2000s with her double-sided paintings in which she dripped and hosed paint through the canvas, allowing this process to reveal the two picture planes as fundamentally and materially interdependent. In her newly developed body of work of which two examples will be on display, Nelson reintroduces the figure, and her way of eschewing rather than producing contradiction comes full circle.

Reviewing Nelson's 2014 exhibition in the *New York Times*, Roberta Smith wrote: "Incrementally and without nearly the attention she deserves, Dona Nelson has become one of the best artists working today, partly by spending over two decades wrestling with the idea of a painting as a free-standing object with two distinct sides and, in many ways, a mind of its own."

Unlike Nelson, Gendel did not arrive at her stylistic vocabulary over time. Stylistic variety has been present since her earliest works, perhaps influenced by being a member of the first generation with unfettered access to the limitless images of the internet. Her task then was to extract meaning and relevance, sifting through what is available and probing it for resonance and potential. Gendel embraces painting as a surface of contradiction, in which

# Thomas Erben Gallery

divergent styles, processes, and references circulate simultaneously, unfolding in a fluid examination of what is possible in the medium. This is reflected in the grid of smaller, framed works on paper, which will function as an index of her range of compositions, palettes, and motifs.

This presentation will not only compare these two highly competent painters in terms of their formal approaches to the medium of painting, but will examine how their distinct generational backgrounds have influenced their respective practices.

## **Recent and Forthcoming Exhibitions:**

### **Jackie Gendel**

*Group Show* with Louise Bonnet, Huguette Caland, Julie Curtiss, Jackie Gendel, Heidi Hahn, Jeanne Mammen, Aliza Nisenbaum, Emily Sunblad, Alice Tippit  
**Anton Kern Gallery**, January 12 - February 14, 2017

*A New Subjectivity: Figurative Painting after 2000*  
with Gina Beavers, Katherine Bernhardt, Katherine Bradford, Jackie Gendel, Liz Markus, and Rose Wylie  
**Pratt Manhattan Gallery**, February 24 - April 12, 2017  
**Fine Arts Center Gallery**, University of Arkansas, August 16 - September 22  
**Reece Museum**, East Tennessee State University, October 16 - December 15  
curated by Jason Stopa

### **Dona Nelson**

*Unpainting* (including work by Daniel Buren, Frank Stella, Mark Bradford, Art & Language, Morris Louis, Katharina Grosse, Sigmar Polke, and others)  
**Art Gallery of New South Wales**, Sydney, September 16 - August 12, 2018  
curated by Nicholas Chambers

**Armory Show 2018** - Focus Section, March 8–11, 2018  
Solo Presentation

*Stand Alone Paintings*  
**Tang Teaching Museum at Skidmore College**, May 12 - August 12, 2018  
Solo show curated by Ian Berry  
Catalogue forthcoming

Thomas Erben Gallery

## Jackie Gendel



Installation view: *La Derrière Mode*, 2016

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*La Derrière Mode*, 2016  
Oil and vinyl on linen  
78 × 73 in.

\$21,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



## Jackie Gendel New Works

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 20 in.

\$6,500

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
20 x 16 in.

\$6,000



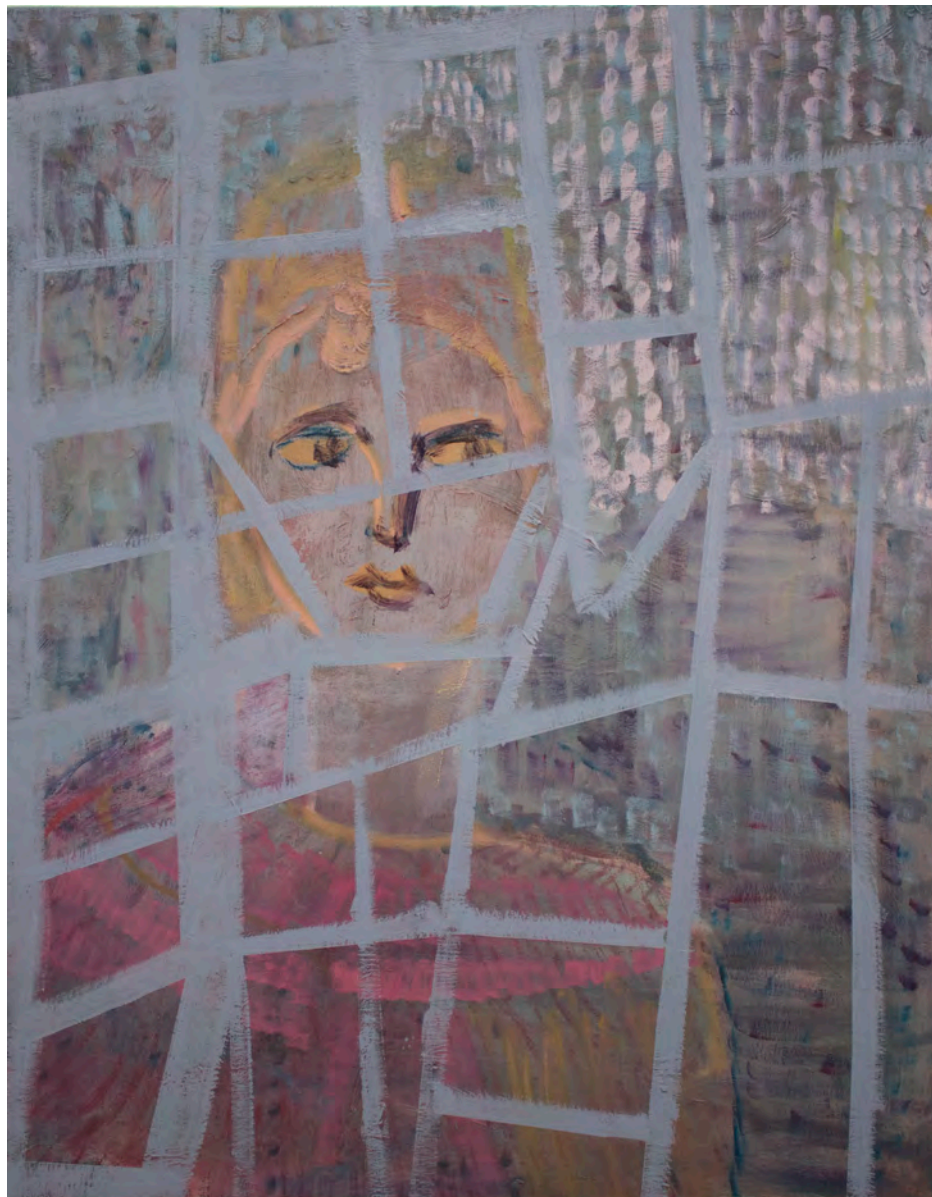
# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 20 in.

\$6,500

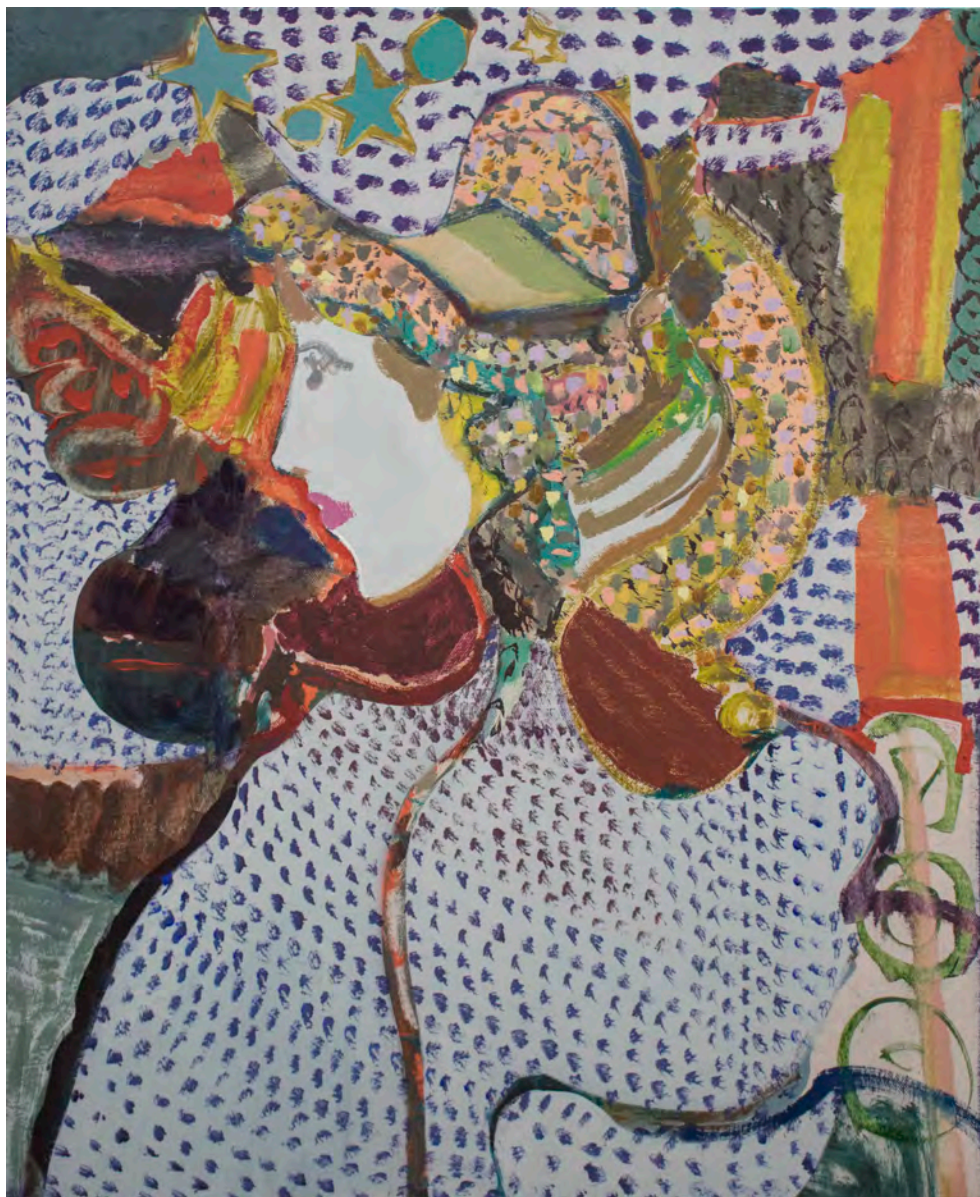
# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
26 x 20 in.

\$7,000

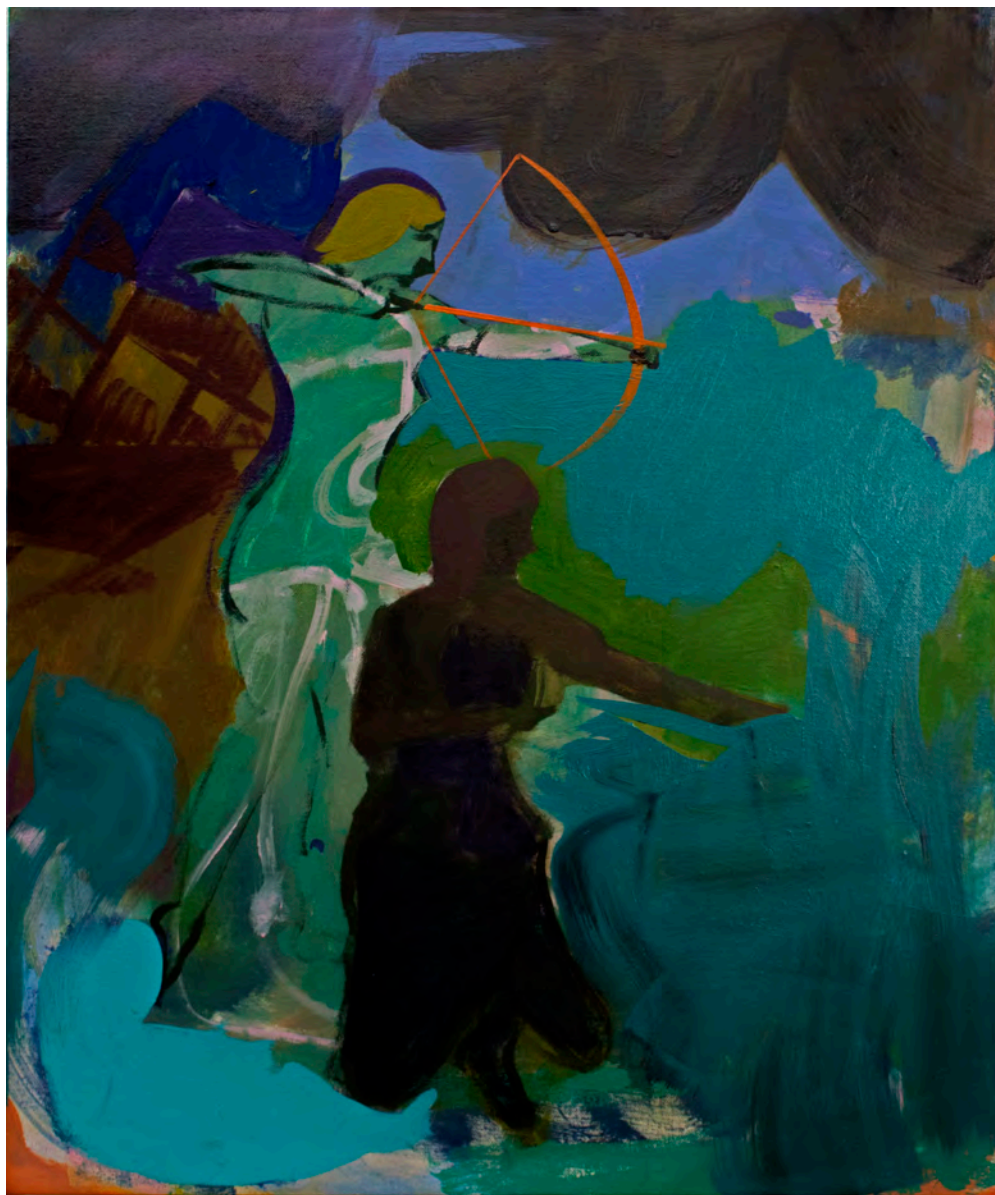
# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 20 in.

\$6,500

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 20 in.

\$6,500

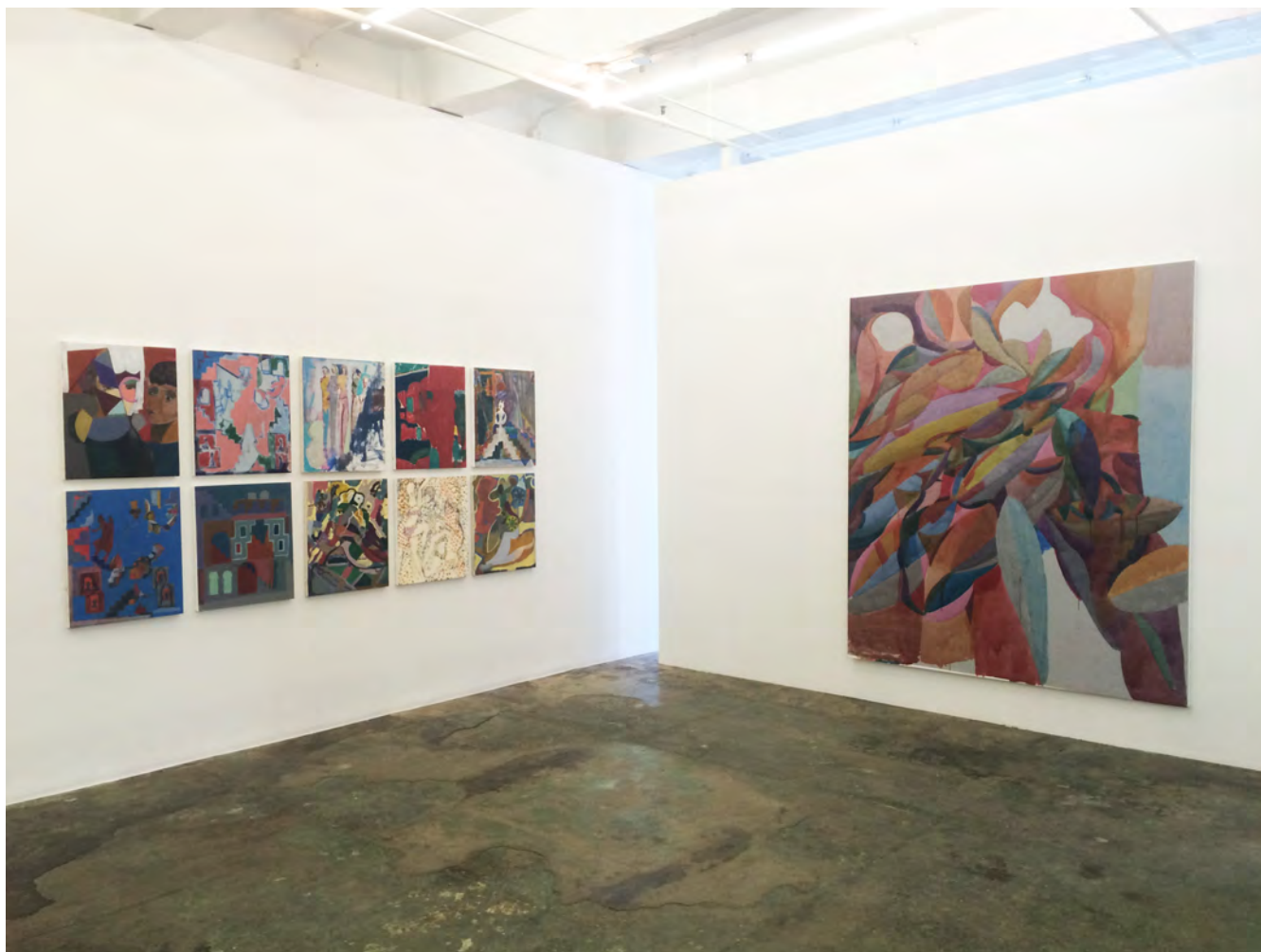
# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Untitled, 2017*  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 18 in.

\$6,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



Installation view: *Radiant Flux*, 2016

# Thomas Erben Gallery

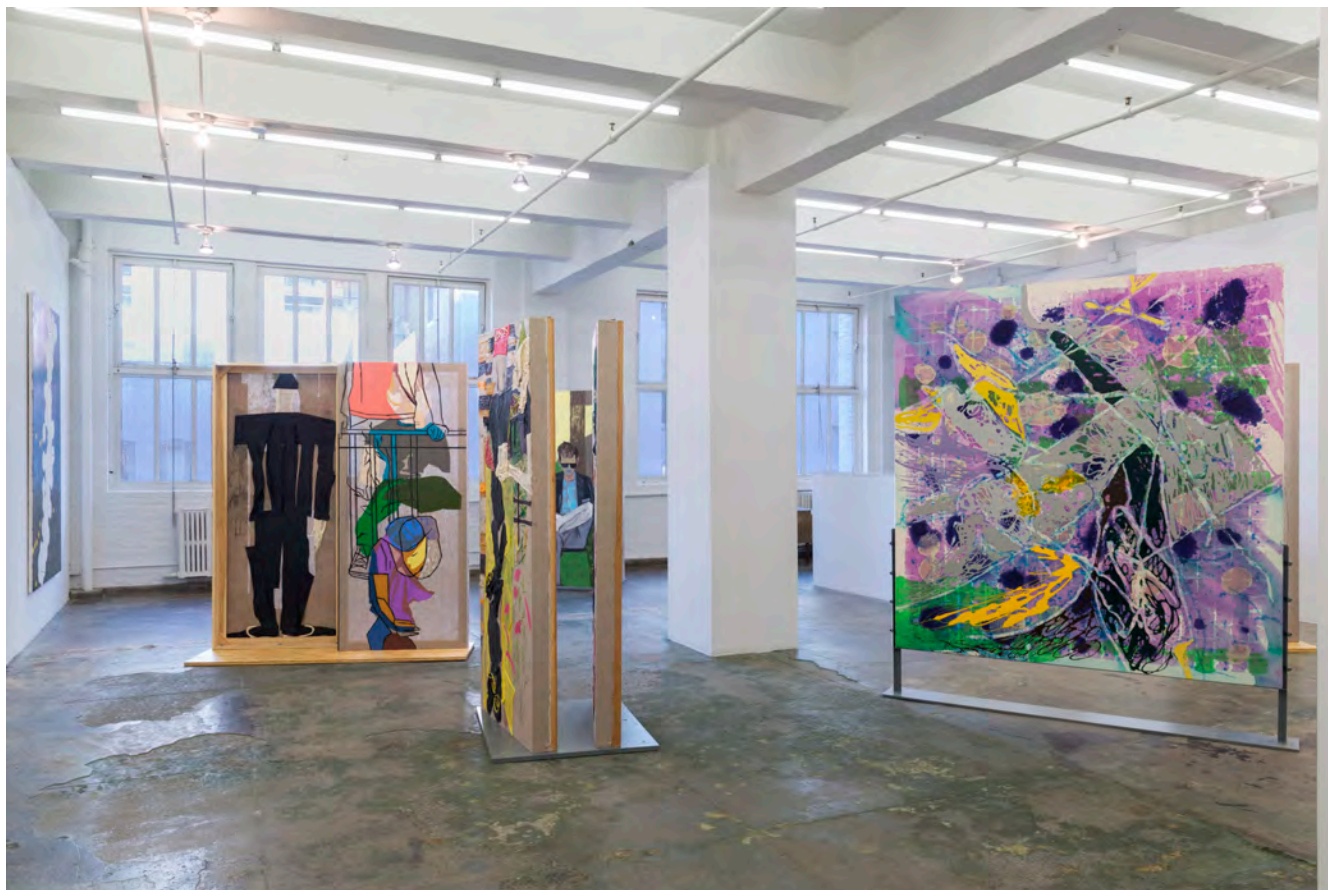


*Radiant Flux*, 2016  
Oil and vinyl on linen  
84 × 72 in.

\$21,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery

## Dona Nelson



Installation view: *Platform*, 2017



# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Platform, 2017*

Collage, dyed cheesecloth, muslin, and acrylic mediums on linen mounted on plywood base  
81.5 x 36 in.

\$45,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



Installation view: *Mountain Passenger*, 2017

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Mountain Passenger, 2017*

Collage, dyed cheesecloth, muslin, and acrylic mediums on linen mounted on plywood base  
81.5 × 36 in.

\$30,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Studio Portrait over Time*, 2016  
Cheesecloth, muslin, painted string and acrylic mediums on linen  
81.0 × 35.5 in.

\$45,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



*Studio Portrait over Time, 2016 (detail)*

# Thomas Erben Gallery

**Also available:**



Dona Nelson, *Stamen*, 2017  
Acrylic and acrylic mediums on canvas  
59 × 61 in.

\$32,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



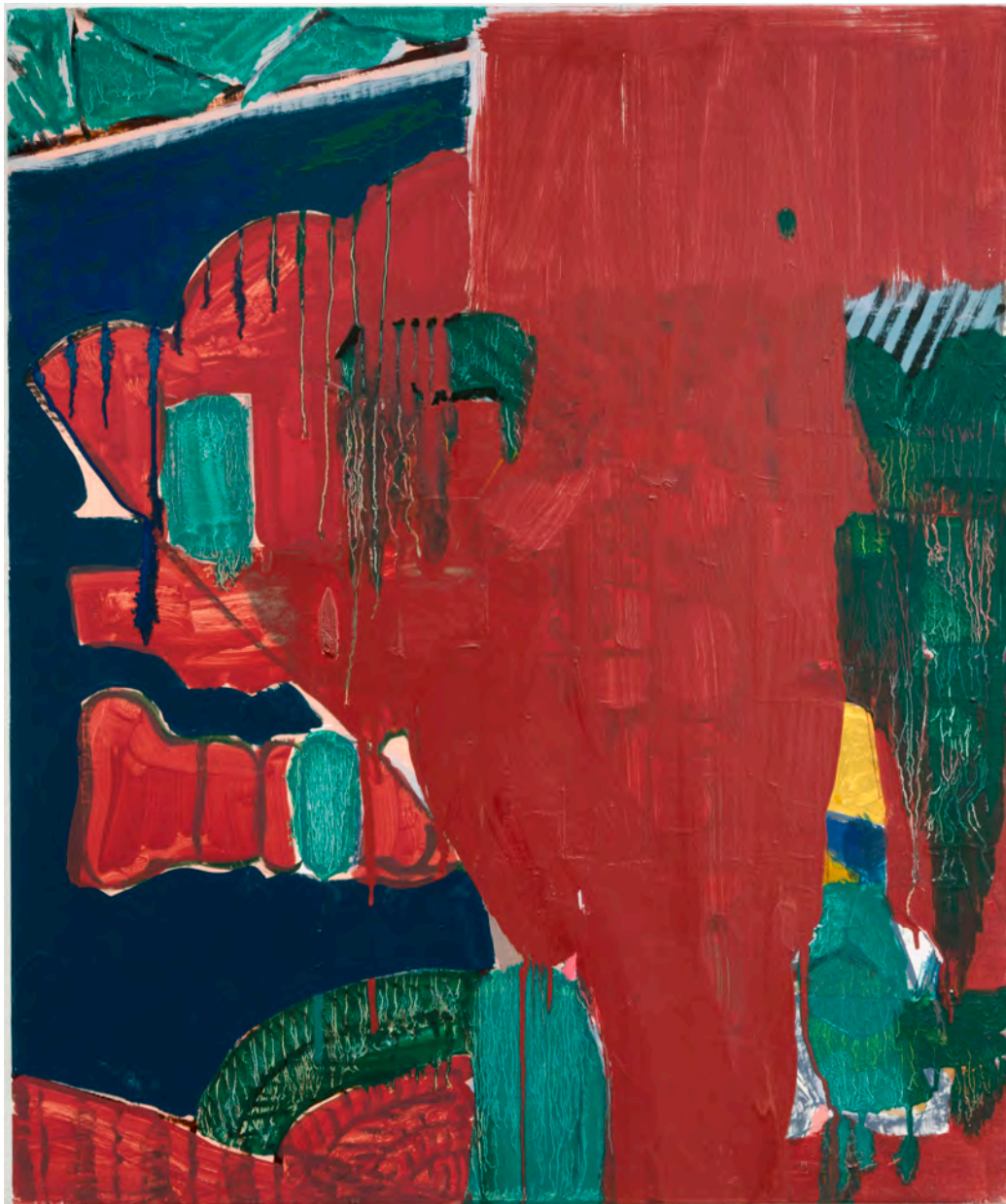
Jackie Gendel, *Archers*, 2016

Oil on canvas

66 × 64 in.

\$17,000

# Thomas Erben Gallery



Jackie Gendel, *Untitled*, 2015-2016

Oil on canvas

20 x 24 in.

\$6,500



# Thomas Erben Gallery



Jackie Gendel, *L'Age d'Or*, 2015

Oil on canvas

84 x 72 in.

\$21,000

# Galleries



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND ADAM REICH, THOMAS ERBEN GALLERY, NEW YORK

## DONA NELSON

Through May 20. Thomas Erben Gallery, 526 West 26th Street, Manhattan; 212-645-8701, thomaserben.com.

The painter Dona Nelson has never been one to set limits. For years now, she has made some of the toughest paintings around, articulating her medium with dissonant techniques, surfaces and colors; freely mixing figuration and abstraction into elaborate narratives of process, art and life while regularly trespassing into three dimensions. But these tendencies have rarely been stated as elaborately, intensely or joyously as in “Models Stand Close to the Paintings,” at Thomas Erben in Chelsea, a show of nine new works accompanied by two earlier ones serving as their footnotes.

The installation forms a loose, kaleidoscopic maze of contrasting viewpoints. Especially complicated are two free-standing pieces made on two door-size panels. Verging on architecture, “By the Yard” (which has wonderful areas of coarse, crazed embroidery) and “Passengers” almost require wedging yourself between the panels to see the four-sided progressions of linked images. Sometimes evoking the blocky figures of the Russian Constructivists, the exceptional “Platform” presents two panels side by side, with contrasting figurative styles, types of material and degrees of abstraction on four surfaces.

Ms. Nelson began working both sides of free-standing canvases long before it became a craze among younger painters. A prime example here is “Lavender Lion,” whose thick pours or stains of lavender, purple and yellow continue her longtime dialogue with Jackson Pollock — growling at his painting “Number 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist)?” Ms. Nelson’s signature cheesecloth is used here, creating looping skeins of stenciled lines on one side and an orderly grid on the other. In “Autumn Andrew,” green cheesecloth suggests tall grass behind a larger-than-life portrait of a seated man with a thoughtful face and a blue-checked shirt, both wonderfully painted. This is a great show.

ROBERTA SMITH

Works from the Dona Nelson exhibition “Models Stand Close to the Paintings,” above, at Thomas Erben Gallery. At left, Sara Cwynar’s “Tracy (Grid 2).” Below left, Rochelle Goldberg’s sculpture “Sun anchor of origin, are you?” Below right, one of Peter Dreher’s early untitled skull works from 1947.



# HYPERALLERGIC

GALLERIES

## Collaged Paintings with Presence

Dona Nelson's works are literally made to stand up for themselves, bolted to wooden platforms and staged in coterives of pictorial bodies.



Seph Rodney

April 14, 2017



*models stand close to the paintings, installation view (all images courtesy of Thomas Erben Gallery and the artist; all photos by Adam Reich)*

Dona Nelson stole the title to her current solo exhibition, *models stand close to the paintings*. It originally appeared in a 1951 *Vogue* magazine spread, in which Jackson Pollock's work served as a design backdrop for the shoot. Here, Nelson takes the opposite tack: Her double-sided, collaged paintings take up space and have a presence akin to that of other people.

The works are literally made to stand up for themselves, bolted to wooden platforms and staged in coteries of pictorial bodies. I had a moment in the gallery of experiencing them as I do other people in the wash of mass transit, when I caught a glimpse of one of the "Passenger" (2016) pieces (a sitting man in gray trousers, a black jacket, and dark glasses) *through* one of the "By the Yard" (2016) pieces.

The work is consistently varied in terms of materials, colors, and style of construction — the latter being the most fascinating to me. There's scrunched-up cheesecloth, muslin, and drawing used to form the figures, but some bodies are rounded and amorphous, while others are blocky compositions of squares of color or rectangles of black that imply a body but leave the figuration as only a suggestion of the complete form.



Dona Nelson, "Platform" (2017), collage, dyed cheesecloth, muslin, and acrylic on linen mounted on plywood base, 81.5 x 36 in.; base: 74 x 22 in.



Dona Nelson, "Platform" (2017), (reverse side), collage, dyed cheesecloth, muslin, and acrylic on linen mounted on plywood base, 81.5 x 36 in.; base: 74 x 22 in.

The exhibit includes an embedded [Youtube video](#) of the artist talking about the work. In it, she says she likes the mix of illusion

and physicality that also happens with real bodies. Yes — that preference comes through. Like other people’s faces and forms, some of these resolved the closer I got; others needed more distance for their features to cohere. Many still remain strangers that I’ve only met in passing, but one or two reminded me of an old teacher or uncle, and with them, I spent more time.



*models stand close to the paintings, installation view*

[models stand close to the paintings](#) *continues at Thomas Erben gallery (526 West 26th Street, 4th floor, Chelsea) through May 6.*

 **comments (1)**