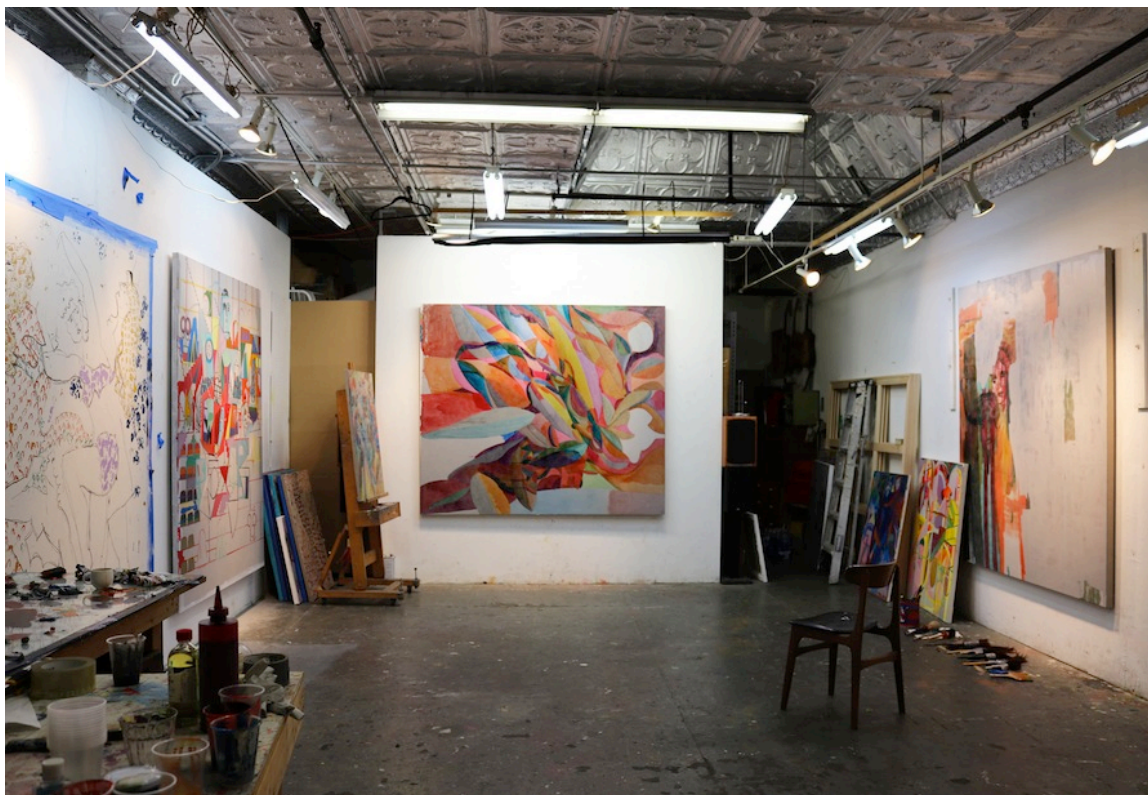


Thomas Erben Gallery



Jackie Gendel

September 8 – October 29

Opening reception: Thursday, September 8 from 6 – 8:30 pm

Artist Talk: Saturday, October 1, 4 pm

Thomas Erben Gallery is pleased to present new paintings by Jackie Gendel in its first solo exhibition with the artist. In these works, Gendel embraces painting as a surface of contradiction, in which divergent styles, processes, and references circulate simultaneously. Within her work, the decorative is anything but frivolous. While the paintings are produced with great care, they also require that Gendel abandon complete control. In doing so, she allows the unknown, miscues, repetitions and anomalies to unfold in a fluid examination of what is possible in the medium.

Groups of women, a recurring motif in Gendel's work, appear in several of the exhibited pieces walking arm in arm, evoking cliques, human chains, or marching Suffragettes. In *La Derrière Mode*, three female faces are rendered in dark contours, their features delineated over a surface of colored washes. Their forms, floating on the left half of the canvas, are encroached upon by a heavy field of overpainted gray. In *The Grammar of Ornament II*, a group of women is sketched out across a sparse canvas through a rough gray line. Their bodies are given mass through a field of stamped pattern, dabbed with the bristles of various brushes, but referring to fingerprints and lipstick kisses. The works are decorative, but rigorous; their mannered treatment playfully recalls the visual language of the social groups they depict.

Thomas Erben Gallery Inc.
526 West 26th Street, 4th floor
New York, NY 10001
212.645.8701
www.thomaserben.com
info@thomaserben.com

Thomas Erben Gallery

Radiant Flux depicts a crystalline structure in a shifting mass of colored forms. The image does not resolve into either a persona or a structure, but rather seems to recall various Cubist-spawned movements, a space not quite Orphist, not quite Vorticist, not quite Rayist. The fluid application of paint leaves an ambiguous surface, a texture that evokes not only paint, but dyed fabric as well as the rough plaster of a fresco. This delicate instability evokes a sense of improvisation, which is countered by the narrow strip of white that runs up the left border. The edge forces the viewer to read the work's components contextually, and the painting – with each variation in texture and tone – becomes surprising.

Included within the exhibition is a grid of smaller canvases that function as an index of the compositions, palettes, and motifs of the larger works. Serving partly as a Rosetta Stone, these works, with their varying levels of finish, act as a catalogue for the contradictory movements behind Gendel's process. This index helps decipher a work like *Polychromy and the Moving Staircase*, in which a loose grid serves as an architecture, supporting a dense assemblage of forms and color. Diagonal staircases run across the picture plane, with interlocking spaces housing unidentifiable objects. Fragments of machines, rotary telephones, teacups, or masks – she preserves the strangeness of these forms, while still emphasizing the painting's diagrammatic structure.

Gendel's works privilege a process of becoming; they require time, not to resolve their internal contradictions, but to let them steep. In the interplay of their materials and support, and in their nuanced sense of color and texture, these paintings reward extended viewing. Gendel's fine balance of letting go and focusing in causes the paintings to change and to morph, confounding the categories out of which they were made. What was charmingly decorative becomes permeated by a sense of instability.

Jackie Gendel (b. 1973, Houston, TX) received her BA from **Washington University**, St. Louis, in 1996 and her MFA from **Yale University** in 1998. Her work was first seen at this gallery in *Painting Forward*, Spring 2016. Since 2000, she has participated in numerous group shows; solo exhibitions include **Jeff Bailey**, New York (2013, 2012, 2010, 2006), **Loyal Gallery**, Malmö (2012), **Moti Hasson**, New York (2008), and **Mixture Contemporary Art**, Houston (2004, 2002). Reviews of her work have appeared in **Modern Painters**, **Artforum**, **New York Times**, **Art in America**, **New Yorker**, **Art Papers**, and **Hyperallergic**, to name a few. The **American Academy of Arts and Letters** awarded her an Academy Award in 2007. She participated in the **Marie Walsh Sharpe Space Program** in 2010 and was an artist-in-residence at the **MacDowell Colony** in 2005. Gendel lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.