

# Between Picture and Viewer

## The Image in Contemporary Painting

In the fall 2010 semester, the College presented “Between Picture and Viewer: The Image in Contemporary Painting,” an exhibition of recent work by 19 established and emerging New York artists that examined the relationship between contemporary painting and the notion of “the image” in today’s increasingly hyper-visual culture. Curated by Tom Huhn, chair of the BFA Visual and Critical Studies Department, and faculty member Isabel Taube, the exhibition rejected the claim that the traditional image is now obsolete. Huhn and Taube point to a renewed interest and relevance in painting, which makes a compelling argument for the materiality of art at the current moment, despite a preponderance of ephemeral and performance-based works in contemporary art practice. “Between Picture and Viewer” brought more than 50 paintings to the Visual Arts Gallery, the majority of which were new works that had never before been exhibited in New York.

Huhn says, “We set out to explore how painters from the New York area were dealing with the image in their recent work. Rather than starting with a preconceived idea about the image in painting, we visited and spoke with a cross-generational selection of artists who work in either abstract or representational styles, or a combination of both. The exhibition emerged from the conversations we had with these painters and the images we encountered in their artworks.”

As Taube suggests, “These works further the modernist debate about whether a painting should be considered predominantly an image or an object.” Each of the participating artists in the exhibition grapples in a different manner with traditional approaches to the image in painting—some referencing, others embracing and still others refuting. In doing so, each artist imbues the historical tradition—and the exchange with the viewer—with fresh meaning.





James Hyde, *California Oaks I*, 2010, acrylic  
enamel on archival inkjet print on stretched linen.  
Courtesy of the artist.





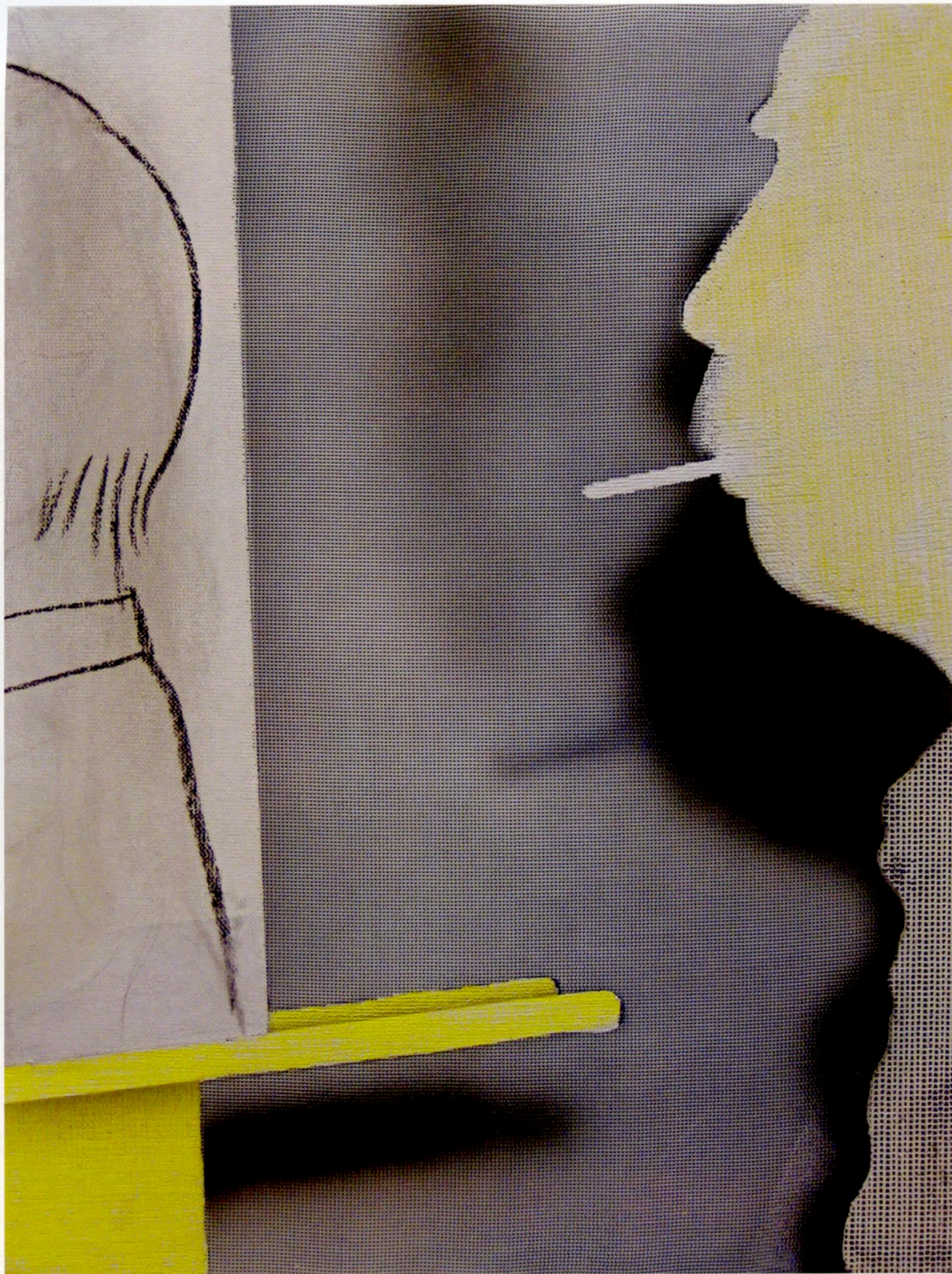
Jill Moser, *Dawn*, 2010, acrylic and oil on canvas.  
Courtesy of Lennon, Weinberg, Inc., New York.





**Ron Gorchov**, *Rasulka*, 2008, oil on canvas.  
Courtesy of the artist. Photograph by Tom Powel.





Alexi Worth, *Smoker and Mirror*, 2010, acrylic on nylon mesh.  
Courtesy of DC Moore Gallery, New York.



Lisa Yuskavage, *Snowman*, 2008, oil on linen.  
Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner.

