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“The patterns grow from the image.” : Painter Deborah Druick on Identity – Interview

By Noah Becker



Deborah Druick, *Aspirational*, 2025

The fantastic painter Deborah Druick has a show on at NYC’s Nino Mier Gallery. I spoke with Druick about her painterly intentions...

Noah Becker: Why do you depict your female figures without faces?

Deborah Druick: The absence of features /expression indicates an absence of identity. A figure that is uncomposed /unfinished. These women have identities that are not yet realized.

NB: Your work explores confinement in domestic spaces. How does this relate to modern society?

DD: My work is about the spaces and situations where women, their identities and voices, are typically silenced. These need not be just domestic, and is a relevant issue today as it was in the past.

NB: How do you choose the patterns and textures in your paintings?

DD: I choose the patterns and textures as I progress in the painting. The patterns grow from the image. The complexities of three-dimensional patterning adjacent to a flatly painted image is interesting in its irregularity.

NB: What role do nature and animals play in your work?

DD: Nature, flowering trees and plants reference pollination. Birds and plumage reinforce mating rituals to attract a partner. The women I paint were led to believe that visual aids were necessary aspects of survival.



Effacing, 2024

NB: Your figures express themselves through fashion and posture. What does this say about female identity?

DD: Sadly, female identity is still navigated through appearance. The recent Oscars is a perfect example of how that continues to exist today.

NB: Women in your paintings are often 'contained.' Do you think these societal barriers are changing?

DD: Societal barriers are changing. Containment and control over what we are allowed to do and say is slowly evolving. There is a yearning for freedom from the boundaries of my paintings' painted borders.



Blindfolded, 2024

NB: In “Blindfolded”, an outside force offers escape. How do others shape female identity?

DD: In Blindfolded, an outside force offers escape. Others can be helpful or at other times complicit in the obscuring of the self. Women have become experts in assessing their options.

NB: How does *Past Present Tense* connect historical and modern struggles for women?

DD: The Past informs the Present and the tension still exists. Societal barriers continue to restrict but we are growing stronger as women, our sense of self increasing.

NB: How has recent recognition and praise, influenced your work?

DD: The recent recognition of my work is encouraging. Even though I’ve painted all my life I only started full-time in the studio in 2016.

NB: What themes or ideas do you want to explore next?

DD: I love the idea of mannequins in my work. I worked for many years as a Creative Director in retail, using mannequins and bust forms.

These silent women that are not really women, these female shapes with no agency, no voice, are fascinating to me and a route I might further pursue.

Debroah Druick *Past Present Tense* continues at Nino Mier in NYC until March 22, 2025.