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SAN FRANCISCO
Jim Gaylord: "Redivider"
at Gregory Lind Gallery

Dada is 100 years old this year, and modernist abstraction even more grizzled, but both styles have aged well, inspiring new generations of artists to, respectively, mock the platitudes of mainstream culture, and create images that transform and transcend reality—even in the digital and conceptual age. Jim Gaylord is an abstract painter who has long explored the found imagery —unseen and unconsidered by most of us—of mainstream Hollywood movies, particularly those of the decidedly artless variety: fast-paced action-movie blockbusters like *Apocalypto* and *Braveheart*, *Cliffhanger* and *Cloverfield,* the cinematic equivalent, however well done, of fast food. (Even in the art world, we're allowed our guilty pleasures.) A former stop-motion animator, Gaylord uses the DVD player's pause button like a camera shutter, grabbing visually powerful but not always decipherable shots of abstract forms in motion, sometimes distorted by camera blur, and superimposing them digitally or using acetate overlays, like animation cels—physically creating new dramas of compelling but ambiguous form and color that elude easy classification or explanation. The hints of representation that appeared in early works disappeared from his 2012 show (also at Gregory Lind), "Skipping Over Damaged Area," (the title a sly reference to the warning signs caused by defective DVDs). Gaylord said that he had lost interest in representation, and created intense, dynamic, even hypomanic abstractions of clashing form based on recombined, transmuted movie stills.

Gaylord's current show is titled "Redivider," which is, of course, a palindrome, but also a witty, Duchampian verbal self-portrait: the artist as cutter and paster, working backwards and forwards, creating shallow spaces where form-objects live and interact vividly. His eight gouache-painted collages, with their resplendent colors and dancing forms, resemble Francis Picabia's 1913 painting *Udnie (Young American Girl, The Dance)*, sharing with that Dadaist a puckish humor about figuration hidden within abstraction, and the odd title (e.g., *Single Whammy, Clumsy Phoenix, Chimney Chirp Secret*); Stuart Davis's exuberant abstractions also come to mind. In four unpainted collages, Gaylord eschews jazzy color, assembling pieces of torn, scored and abraded, textured paper into faux-embossed bas-reliefs that could conceivably evolve into sculpture or printmaking.

—DEWITT CHENG

"Chimney Chirp Secret"
2016, **Jim Gaylord**
Gouache on cutout paper, 46½" x 40"
Photo: courtesy Gregory Lind Gallery

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