



Above from top: *Undone, Marionettes*, Geoff Mitchell

Above: *Palm*, Yvette Molina

dream." He rode his bike to Paramount studios as a teen, sneaking past the gate to enter a fantasy world that was real to him. His paintings call up the variety of arts that fill his life, and the same is true for Geoff Mitchell, who has taken on cinema and sculpture intermittently with painting.

Jack Bender Exhibit
 Timothy Yerger Fine Art
 329 N. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills
 310-278-4400

Geoff Mitchell: Art and Entertainment

The distinct graphic blocks on his paintings, amply displayed at Santa Monica's Lowe Gallery, signify breaks in time in the stories he conjures, like jump-cuts in film editing. "I love the grand, 35 mm works of experimental filmmaker Matthew Barney," Mitchell comments. They inspire the multi-sensory experience Mitchell strives for in his collage paintings where collected images present themselves with the linguistic agility of words. Stock photographs, line drawings, thumbprint emblems and familiar motifs join his newly drawn human figures painted on wood. The layers of images, fading under the screen-like textures he creates, speak through a personal geometry. For example, in *Undone*, big splashes of paint top an old photo of a silent-movie icon (think Clara Bow) mounted on one of several color-coded square panels. Though images in other works are clearly children, they are often drawn or painted as if from a century ago. *Marionettes*, a double self-portrait, presents a still photo of the painter dressed in costume for his own motion picture, copying an early 1900's photo of Boy Scouts tying knots. "I staged it to build a story that wasn't

there," observes Mitchell, and as for the themes and content, he answers, "I don't know."

Montage is a collision course by which new concepts explode into being, Sergei Eisenstein told us. Mitchell cites him to explain, "When I can fully let go of any fear of the random, nonsensical, and the unknown, I find a way of arriving at conclusions I could never have preconceived." The sepia tones and pronounced brushstroke textures of *Marionettes* upstage the form of the human figures and draw the eye to the words, "Boys Are Quick to Make Promises" stenciled on the painting with a shadow layer beneath the lettering.

"I've always felt that all art is entertainment, and people here are more disposed to enter it in that way, but all art is also something more. Strangely, in L.A. I'm more focused on my painting than on the filmmaking that used to compel me," Mitchell tells us. Positing a shared cultural memory, he confronts it with a disjunctive painting space, one of nostalgia but also hidden relationships and dialogs that defer meaning; nonetheless the works invite us to create stories that can re-invent themselves with each new telling.

Geoff Mitchell Exhibit
 Lowe Gallery
 2034 Broadway, Santa Monica
 310-449-0184

