

# rachel uffner



## Joshua Petker: Serenade

Rachel Uffner Gallery

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Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present *Serenade*, the first exhibition at the gallery by Los Angeles-based painter Joshua Petker. The artist incorporates elements from a range of visual references — including scenes from historical European paintings and cartoonish figures from mid-century children’s books of fairy tales — to create layered, ghostly paintings that appear to contain several overlapping images at once or, possibly, multiple planes of perception. This strategy produces a rich visual dissonance that is mysteriously alluring: the figures themselves are reminiscent of Renaissance archetypes such as troubadours and courtesans, while the fractured method of their representation draws significantly on the influence of Cubism and the works of French painter Francis Picabia in particular.

Petker’s stylistically varied, heterogeneous compositions playfully peel away impressions of direct accuracy within representations of the past, providing a reminder that what appears to contemporary viewers as a historical painting was often created in a theatrical setting with costumes and props. The paintings in *Serenade* similarly delight in artifice and pageantry, positioning Petker himself as a troubadour regaling his audience with tales of romance and adventure.

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