

THE NEW YORKER

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART

Glen Baldrige

Using a Candy Crush palette, and an abundance of drips and oscillating lines, this Brooklyn artist continues his two-decade-long exploration of subcultural aesthetics in a suite of eight paintings on paper, completed last year. Hippie and psychedelic styles converge in works that evoke summer-camp forays into crafts (marbleized paper, yarn painting, spin art). But, in Baldrige's slyly exacting exhibition, the deceptively chaotic qualities of his faux-naïf compositions are balanced by a sophisticated restraint. Two paintings—both titled with the disoriented stoner query “Guys, what?”—depict small groups of startled creatures peering out from the pictures. These absurdly groovy figures are rendered by little more than colorful arches of concentric lines anchored by saltwater-taffy-like eyes, which anthropomorphize forms that would otherwise be categorized as biomorphic abstractions. There's a comment here, perhaps, about pretensions in art and false distinctions between high and low, but it's a subtle one relative to the rowdy charm of the show over all.

—*Johanna Fateman*