

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

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Michael Berryhill, Saturn and Son (2014). Photo: Courtesy Kansas.

Michael Berryhill, Kansas Gallery, 59 Franklin Street, closes June 14

I don't quite know what's going on in Michael Berryhill's paintings. I think that might be part of the point. The nine small-to-medium-sized canvasses by the Texas-born, New York-based artist (b. 1972) are something like Matisse-ian Rorschach blots, sunny, inchoate configurations of lines and colors that suggest slides for an art history test with no answer. Punning titles hint at subjects, but everything is deliberately hard to read—you can pick out the form of a paint-laden easel in *Axis of Easel*, but everything else is a welter of conflicting patterns. In the back gallery, two paintings, one small, one big, face each other across the room, titled *Saturn and Son*. Both are fussy, fuzzy masses of lines that hint at the crouched, depraved Titan of myth (though not in the most obvious way, if you're hip to the reference); both are almost exactly identical in composition, as if to declare, "yeah, this is exactly what I meant to do."