

# ARTFORUM

## Gina Beavers

CLIFTON BENEVENTO

515 Broadway, 6BR

September 6–October 25



On December 1, 1961, Claes Oldenburg's *Store* opened on Manhattan's East Second Street. For sale were replicas of banal objects—a plate of meat, a fur coat—made lumpy and lascivious. Each came as a burlesque of the commodity it represented, an enactment of its status as a fetish: lurid, slutty, and psychotic.

Gina Beavers's latest paintings (all works 2014) preserve Oldenburg's morbid obscenity, taking up the genre of the still life in its French inflection as *nature morte*. Derived from images posted on social-media platforms, their subjects—a "smokey eye" tutorial, junky nail art, a smile girded by braces—conflate the animate and the inanimate, figuring flesh as something lifeless and flaccid.

Gina Beavers, *Who Has Braces*, 2014, acrylic and wood on canvas, artist frame, 30 x 30"

Depicted straight on and close-up, several are serially composed, reflecting the use of online "collage apps" that mime the structure of desktop display. As in Oldenburg's *Store* objects, questions of morphology are at stake here. Small in scale, Beavers's canvases consist of sedimented layers of palette-knifed acrylic built up with modeling paste. Less pictorial than topographic, each positions paint's materiality as a metonym for that of the body's, making the latter seem cadaverous by comparison.

*Crotch Shots from the Getty Villa*, a five-part display of depictions of Greco-Roman genitalia snapped from statuary at the titular museum, is the show's highlight. Riffing on the age-old equation of paintbrush and phallus, the work collapses the logic of the polyptych, a favored format for Renaissance devotional imagery, onto that of the lewd selfie. Color is vivid and at moments tenuously mimetic: in the lower right, a spectrum of moist mauves; in the upper center, a gluey gray, like day-old oatmeal. The resulting forms are equal parts comic and repulsive, factual and abstract. In Beavers's hand, a sculptural afterthought becomes swollen and larval, recalling to us the strangeness of our enclosure by sweat glands and skin.

— Courtney Fiske September 26, 2014