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Jesse Willenbring

Landline

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The word landline has a good ring to it. With two “L’s” each followed by three letters it’s also a well balanced, aesthetically pleasing word to look at. It could also be broken up into “land” & “line,” a clunky way to describe the drawing of a horizon. One needs to draw a horizontal line in order to create the illusion of a ground, to give the illusion of the separation between land and sky.

I associate the landline with stability. The landline might be an outdated mode of communication, yet they feel more stable than the dropped calls of current cell phone transmissions. Similarly, by using the simplest of tools—a pencil— we can imagine endless scenarios with a single horizon line. The drawn line is never dependent on a latest technology, specific material, or complex explanation. The thin blue lines wrapping the walls are an overall ground for a series of pictures to exist on or in. When looking at a single picture this ground has a stabilizing effect. As one scans the space, the baselines and starting points for each set of lines begin to shift creating a slightly disorienting perceptual effect.

The pictures themselves are paintings of posters—a set of graphic thoughts ranging from the art historical to the familiar. The translation of each poster’s content into paint is an abstraction, and any content has been “pushed back” into the ground of each painting’s overall composition. As I stack many posters on top of, next to, or near other posters, a residue of color, texture, or shape emerges, declaring the essence of an image.

–Jesse Willenbring, May 2015

For images or more information, please contact gallery@laurelgitlen.com.