Gene & Fred

Extended Leave
March 14th to April 25th, 2026

Joshua Abelow
Bjorn Copeland
Mark A. Rodriguez
Matt Siegle
Augustus Thompson

Sometimes it is necessary to simply step away. Today, everything feels urgent, as we bear witness to the world's absurdities and injustices. As a gallerist and writer, I personally feel a keen obligation to speak out at every turn. And yet, I also know that burnout is real — and that retreat, reflection, and wonder are essential if we are to continue seeking meaning, solace, love, and truth.

I'm not talking about wellness culture — mindfulness, intention, self-care — they're all fine. But they can also slip into solipsism, a kind of self-contained comfort that ignores the thrill and unpredictability of life outside our own particular personal routines. What I'm thinking about is simpler: How often we forget the natural beauty of a tree, the unexpected humor of a stranger, the miracle of life itself. What else? How curiosity can lead us somewhere new — if we only allow ourselves to be vulnerable, if we only risk one of the scariest possible outcomes in life: being wrong. Moreover, how adventure is not something we buy, but rather something we pursue.

The work in this exhibition engages with that tension both delicately and directly. It reminds us what's possible, what's remarkable, and what's worth fighting for — even in the smallest of ways. Joshua Abelow, Bjorn Copeland, Mark A. Rodriguez, Augustus Thompson, and Matt Siegle each approach this in their own manners and methods, offering glimpses of hope, faith, and discovery. Together, their work becomes a reminder: escapism is not avoidance — it can actually be a form of contemplation, of conception, and of courage.

- Keith J. Varadi, March 2026