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A Flood of Faces

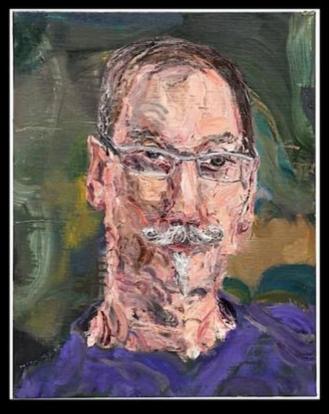
by Blake Gopnik Nov 16, 2012 4:30 PM EST

The Daily Pic: For 40 days, painter Nick Miller churned out likenesses.









(Courtesy Nick Miller)

These dashing portraits of New York critics David Cohen and Joseph Wolin (both friends of mine) are part of a 40-day, 40-portrait campaign waged by Irish painter Nick Miller, when he was in residence this fall in a Brooklyn studio. Miller isn't a painter so much by profession, as by ontology. His practice is all about facing up to what being a painter could mean, at this late date, and to what is involved in using paint to encounter the world. The result, often, seems to be a kind of "painting degree zero" - just making representation happen, without thinking too much about style or manner. It's as if Samuel Beckett had written, "I can't paint, I will paint."

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Blake Gopnik is a contributing critic to Newsweek and The Daily Beast and writes on art and design for a wide range of publications. He previously spent a decade as chief art critic of The Washington Post and before that was an arts editor and critic in Canada. He has a doctorate in art history from Oxford University, and has written on aesthetic topics ranging from Facebook to gastronomy.

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