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DOWNTOWN

Jacqueline de Jong

Through Jan. 8. Ortuzar Projects, 9 White Street,
Manhattan; 212-257-0033, ortuzarprojects.com.



Jacqueline de Jong's painting "Sous Terrain" (2021), in her show "Border-Line" at Ortuzar Projects. Jacqueline de Jong and Ortuzar Projects

Jacqueline de Jong is the rare artist who engaged with radical politics in her youth and whose work, more than half a century later, still crackles with committed activism. De Jong, a Dutch artist, was associated with the Situationist International, which started in the late 1950s and combined elements of Dada, Surrealism and Marxism to confront postwar capitalism and the burgeoning "spectacle" of the mass media. "[Border-Line](#)" is her first solo show in New York in more than 50 years; [an exhibition surveying her career](#) is currently touring Europe.

At Ortuzar, de Jong's bright paintings filled with jagged figures and forms depict migrants in refugee camps or trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea. Works like "Locked In and Out" (2021) and "Sous Terrain" (2021) suggest the horror and dread of migrants caught in deadly situations while the world observes them

through the insulated lens of the mass media. (As a teenager, de Jong, who is Jewish, fled from the Nazis.) The "Border-Line" paintings are drawn with the crude, pre-punk energy of Art Brut, as well as the Belgian artist James Ensor or the Danish artist Asger Jorn (de Jong's erstwhile partner).

In the 1960s, de Jong edited "The Situationist Times" and participated in a Parisian protest movement that nearly toppled the French government. If young radicals are characterized by their idealism, old ones like de Jong display resilience and longevity — as the American activist philosopher Donna J. Haraway reminds us, [staying with the trouble](#) rather than running away or retiring from it.
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