

whitehot | April 2008, NE XT: Invitational Exhibition of Emerging Art by Keith Brown

NEXT: Invitational Exhibition of Emerging Art
April 24th, opening preview 7–10p.m., by invitation
April 25th through 28th 2008
“Art Smorgasbord: An Observation”

[selection]

Kimberley Hart, *Magnolia*, 2008, 19 x 24 x 5 inches, Framed acrylic painting with Sculpey snare and wood scaffolding, courtesy Mixed Greens Gallery



Kimberley Hart offers a great departure from the first two artists, (Shelley and Montague) because she represents a pure artistic strategy that lends itself to the very personal in a way that Shelley's diagrams avoid deep emotion and that Montague's humor distracts from personal referents. Hart is represented by Mixed Greens Gallery in New York City. The works *Magnolia*, 2008 and *Trap Scenario I*, 2006, draw from a personal place that generates Hart's alter ego which combines the sweet girl with the tomboy. Metaphorically, you can think of the sweet girl type as a Shirley Temple character and the second as Pippi Longstocking—by merging these two types Hart is able to create work that suggests a tomboy girl figure in content and the sweet girl by way of medium and stylistic choices. The work itself is inspired from a kitschy arts and crafts aesthetic, which plays up the typical or expected female style of art circa 1950's (see *Good Housekeeping/Betty Crocker*). The fascination with sporting scenes like angling, trapping and hunting help Hart communicate the tomboy, while creating the works in knitting styles force us to see the softer gentler sweet girl. I found this work to be thoughtful and aesthetically brilliant in a sentimental way. As a viewer, you have a special memory or place in your heart for quilts like grandma used to make and latch-hook rugs. You may not accept these as serious art materials but you are disarmed by their presence and you welcome them to the conversation. Hart's dynamic fusion of the sentimental and novel knock you back on your heels. The materials do more than take you back to mom's house, they also highlight female types and the past restrictions placed on young women. Three things are happening at once in this work, first there is a gender conflict, which splits Hart causing a rupture of an alter ego and then furthering her alter ego to splinter into two separate bodies that try to make the work of art in their relative images. Secondly, the artist is extracted from the process; leaving the two alter ego children too often times battle it out forcing compromise. Lastly, social roles confuse the process, leaving the entire work to make a statement about female positions within the art community and the greater male dominated culture.

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