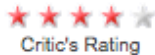


rachel uffner



Art



Art Review

Anya Kielar, "Face"

The artist's wall reliefs flirt with the viewer and the nature of identity.

By Anne Doran

Rachel Uffner Gallery, through Apr 4



In her first exhibition at Rachel Uffner, Anya Kielar upends idealized images of women, drawing from sources as diverse as ancient Egyptian art, Roman sculpture, Cubism and Dada to create the willfully individuated personae that populate her work. Relief sculptures in the form of oversize, vaguely Cubo-Futurist eyes, noses and mouths are arranged on the gallery walls. In one case, five eyes share four noses and four sets of lips, so that each "face" merges into the next, perhaps a reference to the provisional nature of identity.

Each relief comprises scavenged materials—wooden spoons, gloves, leaves, rope, cardboard—covered first with house paint, then with sparkling, brilliantly colored sand. Like the cast-off objects in Louise Nevelson's assemblages (to which these works owe a debt), or the words in Gertrude Stein's ultramodernist prose, the component parts of these sculptures function almost solely as abstract forms. But their utilitarian nature is still in evidence, and this, along with associations conjured by particular colors, give these works—a pair of flirty lavender lips composed of strips of ruffled fabric; an epicurean, straw-colored nose, with basket-lid nostrils—much of their humor.

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Two screens anchor opposite ends of the gallery. *Boob, Eye, and Hand Job*

alternates blue-painted egg cartons, each protrusion topped with a bead nipple, with spray-painted eyes, gloves and socks. In the more narrative *Master Creator and Cunning Linguist*, the screen supports a sun and moon, while a freestanding purple Eve regards her snake companion with either lust or disfavor (it isn't clear which). Kielar's new works are unabashedly dazzling and decorative. As Stein once wrote, "Glittering is handsome and convincing."

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