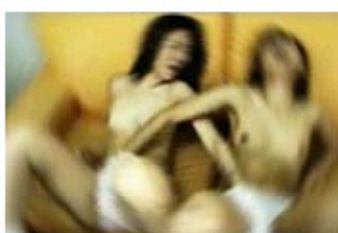


"Sequel" at Domestic Setting

by Kristina Newhouse



[Mike Dee](#)
["...at domestic setting"](#)
 2003
 in "Sequel"
 at Domestic Setting



[Phyllis Green](#)
[Blue Amelia](#)
 2003



[Jeremy Kidd](#)
[Lozenge Port 1](#)
 2002



[Habib Kheradyar](#)
[Untitled, pink](#)
 2003



[Megan Geckler](#)
[Noisemaker](#)
 2003

"Sequel," Mar. 5-29, 2003, at Domestic Setting, 3774 Stewart Avenue, Los Angeles, Ca. 90066

After several years of dormancy, the Los Angeles gallery Domestic Setting has shaken off its slumber just like a pert little heroine in a fairy tale and announced an eagerness to party. For the celebration, titled "Sequel," Domestic Setting co-founders Jeanne Patterson and Bill Radawec (who had relocated in Parma, Ohio, but came back to town for his own solo show at Irvine Fine Arts Center) invited 19 artists to install artworks in the living room, dining area and hallway of Patterson's home. The exhibition of mostly pint-sized works didn't have a theme, and included artists from the Midwest and East Coast as well as from L.A.

Patterson and Radawec first launched Domestic Setting in their homes during the art bust of the early 1990s. It wasn't a commercial operation, but hosted many innovative and critically acclaimed shows, and in the process garnered a reputation as one of the best alternative projects in Los Angeles. Now, Patterson plans to keep Domestic Setting going on her own, producing quarterly exhibitions of one or two artists at a time, in hopes that they will be able to take some inspiration from the unusual site.

Among the standouts in "Sequel" was Mike Dee's digitally manipulated photograph "*...at domestic setting*," in which two half-dressed women fondle each other. Despite what are standard orgasmic expressions and fetish-white panties, the image of the women is surprisingly unkinked. It is almost as if Dee had extracted a layer of prurience using an amazingly effective tool from the Photoshop palette. In his composition, a dark chasm separates the two figures at the focal point of a soft radial blur. This rift seems significant, perhaps suggesting how conscious knowledge is deflected in all fetishistic practice, which both emerges and gains potency from absence. More plainly, "*...at domestic setting*" sustains the mystery of the "little death" even when all is purportedly exposed.

Traveling in the same veiled territory is *Blue Amelia*, a new work by Phyllis Green. Carefully crafted in polyurethane, this sculpture depicts Amelia Earhart's tousled mop of hair. A quick walk around the portrait of the famous aviatrix reveals only more hair. More than a little bit muff-like, *Amelia* intimates that, despite abounding theories, the essence of a woman is as difficult to ascertain as the fate of the missing pilot.

Habib Kheradyar capitalizes on an illusion called the "moiré phenomenon" in his visually seductive abstraction *Untitled, pink*. He created this optical trick by superimposing one layer of transparent woven cloth over another, which resulted in a new and distinct pattern. Kheradyar enhanced the effect by directing light through the synthetic fabric, which in turn distorts the rippled bands of vivid pink. While his painting is formally satisfying in its minimalist simplicity, subtler meaning can be derived from it. Kheradyar was born and raised in Iran, but has spent much of his adult life in the United States. In view of his biography, it is possible to interpret the transformation of pattern in *Untitled, pink* as a reflection upon the cultural complexities arising from the immigrant experience.

It is small wonder that Megan Geckler has to keep an eye on children when they discover her sculpture. In *Noisemaker*, her usage of nursery school hued plastic coupled with a "some assembly required" presentation makes it too tempting to resist – not to mention that it resembles an oversized party favor. *Noisemaker* feels just right situated in Patterson's living room. Explosively vernal, the work brings to mind the brassy aggressive beauty of tropical flowers like passion fruit or hibiscus.

The bland faade of an institutional high-rise experiences a futuristic mutation in Jeremy Kidd's *Lozenge Port I*, a combination inkjet photo with acrylic resin and foam on panel. The building's modernist grid is contorted by an elongated oval sinkhole that cradles a dome at its center. Like one of those shiny orbs that mask surveillance cameras in department stores, the new appendage peers out suspiciously at its environment. Although the shape and glossy finish of the structure's adaptation approximate that of a sticky-sweet Luden's cough drop, the lozenge is also a device used in heraldry. Heralds were first added to the armor of combatants to identify friends or foes on the battlefield. Later, these symbols were incorporated into the more insidious skirmishes of rank and class that took place in European royal courts. Kidd's vision of a whimsical yet paranoid architectural Darwinism seems uneasily synchronistic with our society's incipient "are you with me or against me?" times.

There were many more interesting artworks presented in "Sequel." Joyce Burstein contributed a lovely arrangement of mixed messages in *Parthenon East Pediment after Carey*, in which a delicate pencil drawing drafted on an antique collar is literally anchored to the wall with a c-clamp and vise. Lucas Reiner's painting of a barbered tree possesses a quiet grace. Also worth spending time with was Eve Wood's stream of consciousness drawing *High Five* as well as Enid Williams's scattershot painting of numerous small colored circles on white plexi.

Fortunately for those of us who live in L.A., "Sequel" signifies a re-emergence of Domestic Setting on the local art scene. Given the lean times ahead for public art funding, this fresh venture should be worth following.

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