



JULY 18, 2007

## Yummy at Heineman Myers Contemporary Art

Written by DCist contributor Lynne Venart

[Heineman Myers Contemporary Art](#) owner Zoe Myers snatched up [Claire Johnson](#) at the most recent Art Basel in Miami. In her first show at the Bethesda gallery, Johnson's work is sure to spark speculation about the best donut shop in the area, for all of her works in *Yummy*, a new show of work inspired by food, are donut portraits.

Johnson, a former portrait painter, fell in love with the beauty of donuts in 2005. *Yummy* features six smaller donut portraits measuring 15" x 15", and four extra large donuts measuring 36" x 36", for when you are really hungry.

Painted as viewed from above, the donuts are in acrylic on bare maple board. Despite their large size, they appear very lifelike by taking on various imperfectly round shapes, with the shine painted into the glazes revealing crevices in each donut's texture. Looking at Johnson's donut portraits, one is struck by the frivolity of donuts themselves. Although inexpensive, donuts are luxury items. Johnson's work reminds us of our fondness for food, and its connection to memories.



The work of D.C. photographer [Jeanette May](#) combines provocative and playful to discuss a much more serious issue: the cost and ethics of assisted fertility. May's seven pieces juxtapose images of chicken eggs — raw, cooked and in the process of being cooked — with images of pregnant women as well as quotes and statistics from the Department of Health and Human Services and other government agencies. Text from the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee endorsement of the Department of Health and Human Services' \$1 million embryo adoption awareness campaign is placed in the bottom left corner of *Embryonic*, below two images of eggs in various stages of cooking and a center image of a lovely beach at night. Above the images is a second block of text from the National Institute of Health discussing the viability of stem cell research. While May's work is reminiscent of the conceptual art of 1970s-era Hans Haacke, who used photography and text as journalistic fact-finding devices, her use of often playful egg imagery lessens the blow by adding a touch of lightness and humor.

The second D.C. photographer in *Yummy*, Joan Sarah Wexler, displays eight pieces in her *Tearooms and Restaurant Interiors* series. The three of these images which include people in the foreground are the most intriguing in the series, which also includes two close-up photos of food, one of a dessert buffet, and two of still tearoom interiors. *Scene One, Gertrude's Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore* features two older women in the foreground, one wearing a ridiculous furry, floppy hat along with a sparkling Christmas tree sweater, white turtleneck and green glasses. The two women are looking down at their plates, presumably discussing something very elegant and/or British, perhaps their grandsons' riding lessons.



In the back of the gallery, one finds a true gem in [Jane Richlovsky](#). Richlovsky paint on found textiles, incorporating them beautifully into the content of each piece, using them as the patterns for women's dresses, rugs and tablecloths. The found textiles are wrapped entirely around the side of the canvas, and without this hint, one may take longer to notice that the dresses, rugs and tablecloths are, in fact, not painted at all. Richlovsky's work is inspired by advertising, cookbooks and magazines from the early to mid-20th century, and often features women cooking for their male companions, watching their children, and in other similarly domestic situations. All but one of her seven pieces use more than one canvas, with smaller canvases depicting bold patterns which use color and shape to highlight important areas of the main content. In the main panel, *Easy as Peeling a Banana* (pictured left), Richlovsky portrays a woman with delicately

painted maroon fingernails peeling a slice of plastic-wrapped American cheese. The three small square canvases attached to the left of this panel contain varying patterns reminiscent of an era gone by.

While Heineman Myers more often displays solo shows, the likenesses and contrasts of the four artists in *Yummy* make an excellent and intriguing group exhibit of four artists new to the gallery.

*Yummy* will be on display through August 5 at Heineman Myers Contemporary Art, 4728 Hampden Lane, Bethesda, MD. Open Wednesday through Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. There will be a closing reception from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday August 5th, with complimentary food and donuts.

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