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A.I.R.

2011-05-01



A.I.R., the Artists in Residence Gallery (111 Front Street #228 in Dumbo) has been dedicated to the advancement of women in the visual arts for nearly four decades. If you haven't yet been or haven't been in some time, this is the month you should visit. Through May 21st, the Gallery will be hosting three

concurrent shows, each in a variety of media and focus.

In the art space's central Gallery II, you will find elegant photo meditations on cloud forms by Sheila Ross. Shot from an airplane window, these cumulus condensations are cropped vertically and tightly installed, recalling Japanese Screen paintings or Art Nouveau compositions. Ethereal, like their subject matter, they reference both substantiation and amorphous expanse. Directly opposite are the documentary photographs of Jeanette May, which present four voyeuristic views of "Bachelor" (the series title) pads and their handsome inhabitants. Deftly straddling the line between the staged and the captured, these men engage us less through what is seen and more through what we, the viewer, begin to infer from what we can read here. Clues like a chocolate leather love seat, an inter-mural rugby banner and a collection of books on finance gently coerce us into the predatory and hilarious tete-a-tete single's dance of assessing, evaluating and assigning of these innocents into categories that reveal as much about us as they do about the objects that we are surveying.

To the rear of the art space is the Fellowship Gallery, holding "But Nothing Happening", a revelatory assortment of paintings & drawing by 2010-2011 A.I.R. Fellowship Artist, Jiyeon Koo. In this room I am reminded of a thought that I had at a recent Joan Mitchell show; "this is the language of painting." Koo handles her media with an ease and an unforced confidence that, like all skilled artists, makes the challenges of her undertaking seem effortless. In the emerald gem, "Sinking Ship" the artist convincingly suggests, in the most economic of strokes, a canoe sinking into a verdant swamp. Close by, "Bonfire" abstracts a large pyre through intuitive jabs and daubs of oil paint at canvas. This night fire seems inverted though, a ghostly film negative rendered in candied yellows and reds against a blackened turquoise ground.

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The artist paints portraits as well, exemplified by the emotive and layered, "Puberty" and "Trick Mirror", impactful smears of color and line peering out at us quizzically from the frame. Lastly, against a snowy paper field, Koo methodically applies cursive cross hatch and scribble in graphite marks that converge and scatter, indicating a landscape seen from above. In this, her first solo show, Jiyeon Koo asserts that she is fluent in the vocabularies of a few different media.

The gallery as a whole is rounded out by whimsical and vibrant photo-constructions by Daria Dorosh and enigmatic photographs and exceptional pine sculptures by Ann Pachner.

—*Enrico Gomez*

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