



Best in Show
by R.C. Baker
May 6th, 2008

Tamara Kostianovsky

Kostianovsky was born in Jerusalem and raised in Argentina; when she moved to New York, her parents sent her warm clothes, which she eventually cannibalized for her artwork. In life-size sculptures of livestock carcasses, she uses plum, beige, and white fabric of varying textures to conjure flayed flesh, gristle, bone, and slabs of fat. The evident dryness of the surfaces throws the senses for a loop—twisted strands from a coarsely knitted burgundy rug seem to drain from a utility sink, spreading like a coagulated puddle onto the floor. Some pieces are strung on chains, pierced with meat hooks, stuffed into plastic bags, or labeled with purple numbers that recall concentration-camp tattoos. Ask to see the 2007 photo *Unbeknownst*, in which thin leaves of actual bloody meat resemble pages in a book—a beautiful, tenuous alliance of knowledge and brutality, wisdom and the ravening needs of the body. *Black & White*, 638 W 28th, 212-244-3007. *Through May 24.*