



BASIC INSTINCT

December 17, 2010 - January 23, 2011

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:

Colette
Jessica Lagunas
Natsu
Alicia Ross
Vadis Turner

GUEST CURATOR:
Sasha Okshteyn

Black & White Gallery/Project Space, Brooklyn, NY is very pleased to host *Basic Instinct* – a group exhibition by five female artists reflecting on the trajectory of gender-specific issues from cross-generational and diverse social and cultural contexts. Deftly curated, *Basic Instinct*, is an intimate experience – in large part due to the intensely personal and arcane nature of the works that both celebrate and challenge the notions of feminine gender identities traditionally associated with motherhood, sexuality, romance and body image.

Colette, a pioneering artist and persona of downtown New York will have several seminal works on view, together offering a selective survey of her contribution to two significant areas of contemporary art: the creation of a total environment and the use of the artist's own body as an instrument of expression.

New York-based Guatemalan artist **Jessica Lagunas** will present her video-performance series featuring three beauty routines of embellishment incorporated in women's daily lives in such a way that they hardly notice or question them. Each video is a beauty ritual performed by the artist where she applies nail polish, black mascara and red lipstick. The camera focuses on the part of the body where the action takes place: with repetitive gestures she applies makeup continuously for one hour, documenting these mundane activities and their compelling power of transformation.

New York-based Japanese artist **Natsu** has created a site-responsive installation *Cradle – Island Universe* that fills the outdoor gallery space dramatically interlacing vibrantly colored strings of beads suspended in the form evocative of a breast or cradle. Visitors can move through and around the work that sparkles as the beads reflect natural light, creating a luminous effect amplified by the austere industrial space. The milky-circle bead sculpture is hanging in the air to embrace the universe as its birthplace – nest – cocoon.

Texas-based artist **Alicia Ross** explores the mechanism of the consensual production of symbolic values. She passionately tackles difficult subject matter and taboos within society and presents them as naked truth. The works' often provocative appearances highlight the artist's ongoing exploration of ideas surrounding conflicting views of feminine identity in the contemporary society and the ubiquitous virtuous/voracious societal impulses towards the female form. Ross appropriates images from online media sources and digitally translates them into cross-stitched constructions, using the sewing machine as a drawing tool. The finished pieces reflect a fusion between hand-made traditions and digital aesthetics.

Brooklyn-based artist **Vadis Turner** has designed and constructed an environment using ten separate mixed media pieces from the artist's collection of contemporary heirlooms that will comprise her dowry, all arranged as a female body spread on a table top. Each piece is made with discarded and broken jewelry reminiscent of ceremonial adornments used in rites of passage. Each piece is an enlarged replica of the artist's internal organs and major bones. Their worth can be measured in reference to money, beauty, and the body. Visitors can walk around the work, absorbing it as a sculpture or enjoy each individual piece. Turner's intimately scaled, deeply felt objects—in her signature sensual, handmade style—exist along the lines of how women of her generation craft their identities and measure their own worth and value.

Image: Natsu, Cradle-Island Universe, site-responsive installation on view @ Black & White Project Space

For more information and to request images, please contact the gallery: info@blackandwhiteartgallery.com

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