

July 2006

Flicker

A group exhibition featuring work by **JoAnne Carson, Jeff Davis, Timothy Horn, Bettina Sellmann, and Kevin Zucker**

On view at the University Art Museum
August 30 through November 12, 2006

Artists' Reception: September 19, 2006, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Free and open to the public

ALBANY, NY---The University Art Museum is pleased to present the exhibition *Flicker*, which features work by five contemporary artists whose work references the ephemeral and contradictory impulses of the Baroque era. By reinvigorating faded stylistic conventions associated with portraiture, ornamentation, and architectural design, these artists explore how the vestiges of an era more heroic than our own continue to haunt the contemporary imagination. The artists are **JoAnne Carson, Jeff Davis, Timothy Horn, Bettina Sellmann, and Kevin Zucker**.

In an effort to link the present with the past, these artists penetrate stylistic conventions in search of something more complex and felt. Set within the University Art Museum's modernist exhibition space designed by Edward Durell Stone, the excessiveness of these works provides a striking contrast to their architectural backdrop. *Flicker* unites the seemingly oppositional historical forces of modernism and the baroque era by highlighting the futile quest for perfectionism that underlies both sensibilities.

JoAnne Carson's abundant flora and fauna sculptures are made from fiberglass and thermoplastic and span over eight feet high and three feet wide. Like a Baroque flower arrangements on steroids, Carson's *Puppet's Revenge* is at once gorgeous and threatening. Encoded in its gilded branches and pulsating blooms is a warning that all is not right with the natural world. Carson's implausible bouquet defies rationality. Fictitious species sprout in every direction—distorted and overblown, these fantastic reconstructions appear comic at first glance. On closer scrutiny, Carson's desire to both charm and dissuade turns her lovely bouquet into a potent stand-in for the inevitable decay that follows even the most auspicious flowering.

Jeff Davis's watercolors and pencil drawings are filled with perverse acts and false heroics. Located somewhere between the deft touch of an old master's sketch and the tossed-off scrawl of a teenage doodle, Davis's instinctively delicate drawing style belies the psychological magnitude of the indiscretions he depicts: diminutive musclemen, gargantuan severed heads, and Muppet-like creatures devour one another amidst storm clouds, lightning bolts, and down-pouring bodily fluids. An

eerie illumination bathes these mythic realms as fallen men and angry gods struggle to ward off their impending fate. Although, Davis depicts an occasional lost soul shouting in defiance, hope for redemption seems like a dubious goal in the wake of so much folly.

Timothy Horn uses cast crystal and plated bronze to fabricate chandelier-scale sculptures based on 18th-century jewelry patterns. By imitating precious gems and exaggerating their size, Horn radically alters their original context. No longer intimate possessions, these objects dazzle and confound with a faux brilliance that upends conventional readings associated with wealth, power, and taste. Horn's interest in reshaping historical hierarchies is furthered in his most recent wall works, which are based on 18th-century furniture patterns. In these, Horn uses transparent amber-colored rubber to distort his tasteful sources creating objects that creep, ooze, and dangle down the walls with a libidinal force all their own.

Bettina Sellmann's paintings evoke the conventions of old master portraits. Using multi-layers of translucent pigments in pale pinks, powder blues, and acidic yellows and greens, Sellmann renders delicate watercolors on canvas in which solidity and form give way to fluid distortions. As Sellmann peels back the outward signs of entitlement, she gives us a more internalized portrayal of her subjects suggesting the psychological isolation and inevitable decay that lies just beneath the surface of perfected appearances.

Kevin Zucker uses computer software, carbon transfer, and acrylic paint to create large-scale canvases in which modernist design schemes form a disorienting alliance with Baroque interior décor. Beneath meticulously hand-painted glazes, the layered surfaces of these paintings simultaneously reveal and obscure their computer-generated origins. Painted in a muted gray palette, Zucker depicts empty drawing room situations in which the rules of decorum are played out through the strategic arrangement of chairs, mirrors, and chandeliers. A faded opulence permeates these polite interiors: the over-all mood is melancholic as the artifice associated with outmoded conventions gives way to a sense of genuine longing for past accomplishments.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

JoAnne Carson (b. New York City, 1953) received a B.A. from the University of Illinois in Chicago and an M.F.A. from the University of Chicago. She has had solo exhibitions at the Joan Washburn Gallery in New York; Plus Ultra Gallery in New York; Ruth Siegel Gallery in New York and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. Recent selected group shows include Claire Oliver in New York; KS Art in New York; and D.C. Moore Gallery in New York. Selected group exhibitions include the American Academy of Arts and Letters Ceremonial Exhibition in New York; The Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial Exhibition in New York; the Albright Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York; and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Jeff Davis (b. Hanford, CA, 1967) received a B.F.A. from California College of Arts and Crafts in San Francisco, California. He has had a recent one-person show at KS Art in New York. Selected group exhibitions include Mary Boone Gallery in New York; Paula Cooper Gallery in New York; Vilma Gold in

Berlin, Germany; P.S 1/MOMA in Queens, New York; Guild & Greyshkul in New York; Deitch Projects in Brooklyn; Team Gallery in New York; and Galerie Rodolphe Janssen in Brussels, Belgium.

Timothy Horn (b. Melbourne, Australia, 1964) received an M.F.A. in Sculpture from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston in Massachusetts. He has exhibited at Hosfelt Gallery in New York and San Francisco; Knoxville Museum of Art in Knoxville, Tennessee; the Jam Factory in Adelaide, Australia; and the Drill Hall Gallery in Canberra, Australia. He has been in group exhibitions at Mills College in Oakland, California; San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art in San Jose, California; and Brisbane City Gallery in Brisbane, Australia.

Bettina Sellmann (b. Munich, Germany, 1971) received an M.F.A. from Hunter College in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include Galerie Kunstraum Sutter-Kress in Erlangen, Germany; Derek Eller Gallery in New York; and Galerie Kollmeier in Essen, Germany. She has participated in group exhibitions at Groeflin Maag Galerie in Basel, Switzerland; AG Gallery in Brooklyn; Diesel in San Francisco, California; Bronwyn Keenan Gallery in New York; and Gavin Brown's Enterprise at Passerby in New York.

Kevin Zucker (b. New York City, 1976) received a B.F.A. from the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island and an M.F.A. from Columbia University in New York. His work has been exhibited at Mary Boone Gallery in New York; the LFL Gallery in New York; and the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, as well as Jablonka Luhn in Cologne, Germany and Paolo Curti & Co. in Milan, Italy. Selected group exhibitions include Gavin Brown's Enterprise at Passerby in New York; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in Queens, New York; the Brooklyn Museum of Art in Brooklyn; and Shoshana Wayne Gallery in Los Angeles, California.

A fully illustrated color brochure will accompany the exhibition.

For further information or visual materials, please call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at www.albany.edu/museum.

MUSEUM HOURS: Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.