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Anne Chu, *Untitled XIb*, 2002, monotype, 29 1/2 x 55 inches

Extraordinary Visions

June 4 – July 29, 2005

Hans Bellmer, Anne Chu, Amy Cutler, Valérie Favre, Amy Finkbeiner, George Grosz, Karl Hubbuch, Yun-Fei Ji, Alice Maher, Jim Nutt, Erwin Pfrang, Rudolf Schlichter, Peter Stauss

Extraordinary Visions features figurative works on paper by a diverse group of modern and contemporary artists. Elements of allegory, the surreal, the mythical and the mystical, the erotic, and the supernatural, are employed to subvert and even defy what we know simply through what we see. Often times these visions are based on some aspect of reality—social and political conditions, for example, or art history. Sometimes pure and outrageous fantasy emerges. All of these artists bring forth their own versions of reality-based fictions whose narrative threads are open-ended, left for the viewer to complete.

Anonymously created 19th century American collages assembled from mail order catalogues depict the ornate splendor of the idealized middle class home. The tumultuous social and political conditions of early 20th century Europe inspired realist and satirical drawings and prints from members of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* or New Objectivity movement—George Grosz, Karl Hubbuch, and Rudolf Schlichter. Another artist of a slightly younger generation, Hans Bellmer, created masterful drawings of variously contorted and truncated female bodies to explore what he called “an anatomy of desire.” Erwin Pfrang’s compulsive ink and pencil drawings teem with anxiously drawn figures, enigmatic objects and symbols, presenting the viewer with ambiguous narratives that seem to have been derived from the artist’s wild unconscious. Classical Chinese landscape painting meets the chaos and contradictions of modern-day China in the works of Yun-Fei Ji. Surreal situations are acted out by a cast of characters on eerily empty proscenias in Jim Nutt’s works on paper from the 1980’s. Valérie Favre offers up a strange, fairytale-like world of sexy and provocative female rabbits presenting desire and innocence all at once in the manner of the brothers Grimm. The bodies of seemingly ordinary women in simple dress become hybridized with machines and objects in dream-like prints and drawings by Amy Cutler. Peter Stauss’s post-apocalyptic, post-punk renderings in ink and watercolor of haggard hippies and drifters present a dark vision of a culture in decay. The imagery of Alice Maher’s works springs from a reservoir of Irish rural customs and memory, variously intertwined with the pictorial strategies of European medieval sculpture, gender, mythology, and the language of dreams. Medieval iconography has also inspired a series of monotypes by Anne Chu, whose delicate renderings of effigies in spring-like colors evoke the languid and sensual landscapes of Gauguin. Amy Finkbeiner has found seemingly unending inspiration in the stories of women saints and martyrs for her drawings.

Gallery hours: Tuesday-Friday 10-6 and Saturday, 11-6. During the month of July: Tuesday-Friday, 10-6.