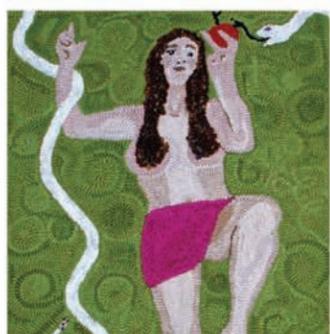
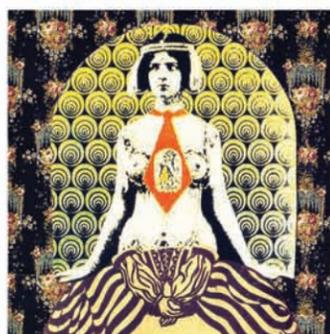


NATURE VS. NURTURE



“*Nature Vs. Nurture* collects images that depict the tension between opposing forces, one wild and one domestic, that characterize the human psyche.”

Nature Vs. Nurture

A group exhibition at Broadway Gallery N.Y.C

Curated by Bonnie Gloris

Human self-domestication has surged with the rapid development of modern society, yet we remain tethered to our wild, natural history. Evolution lags behind domestication, and continues to drive us with primitive instincts. *Nature Vs. Nurture* collects images that depict the tension between opposing forces, one wild and one domestic, that characterize the human psyche.

Stephen Chopek's stylishly straightforward collage *Beauty* represents the idea by juxtaposing an ancient skull with contemporary, lipstick-primped lips. Similarly, Chopek's *Domestic* combines an antiquated, fur-laden man with a modern appliance: the dishwasher. Chopek's use of strikingly improbable images enhances the contrast between the primitive and the domesticated that are entwined within each of us.

Tim Okamura's painting *Siobhan (Whispering)* illustrates the close relationship between the wild and domestic forces of human personality by repeating the subject in two forms. Their mutual entanglement is evident as one personality whispers devilously into the ear of the other. The sly smile on the recipient's face tells us she is getting a diabolical idea. Often our two selves, the wild and the domestic, are conceived as being two faces of one moral coin; one good and the other evil—although it is not always clear which is which. This duality is echoed by Okamura's backdrops of urban graffiti, which evokes the tension between modern city life and our untamed past. Okamura's new paintings for *Nature Vs. Nurture* are an extension of this theme.

Sitting, a series of photographs by Roger Sayre, also seeks to represent the multiple personalities that exist within each of us. Sayre uses a pinhole camera to make a portrait of each subject, the exposure occurring over the course of an hour, which creates “a likeness of the sitter that is possibly truer than a traditional fraction-of-a-second photograph or snapshot. One cannot hold any single expression for the span of an hour; instead, all expressions are merged into one image. The sitter's essence, distilled over time, is revealed” (Sayre). Sayre is able to concentrate the opposing forces contending within each sitter into singularly haunting photographs.

From the symbolic to the literal, each of the artists in this exhibition explore how the disparate aspects of human nature coexist within us, in a way that is individually unique, yet cohesive in their narrative quality and dark undertones. In addition to the aforementioned artists, the exhibition will include George Bates, Greg Brickey, Niina Cochran, Linda Rae Coughlin, Jordan Eagles, Bonnie Gloris, Jordin Isip, Lau Gallico Klohe, Chang Park, Nathan Pickett, D. Jack Solomon, and Kelly Vetter, whose work will support the theme of the exhibition through various mediums, including two-dimensional, three-dimensional, and sketchbook work.

Just as a character in a cartoon that has an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other, we must constantly decide which side to listen to. Why is the domesticated self more prevalent in some, while the primitive self dominates others? Is one, in fact, more desirable than the other? These are the questions explored in *Nature Vs. Nurture*. □



Greg Brickey, *Untitled*, 2010. Acrylic on canvas, 42 x 38 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

GREG BRICKEY

“Influences particular to this series include Ross Bleckner, Henry Darger, and Donald Bachelor.”

This new acrylic on canvas painting is part of a series of works started in the early 1990s. Like most of my visual art, the baseball bat painting is ambivalent in theme and execution. Influences particular to this series include Ross Bleckner, Henry Darger, and Donald Bachelor. □

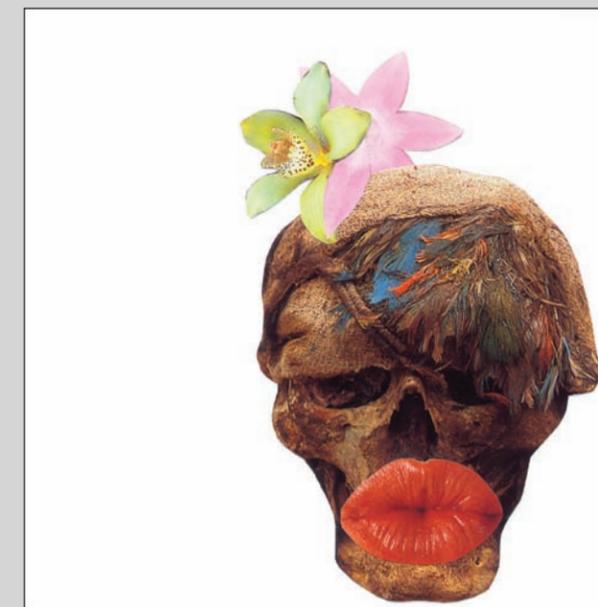
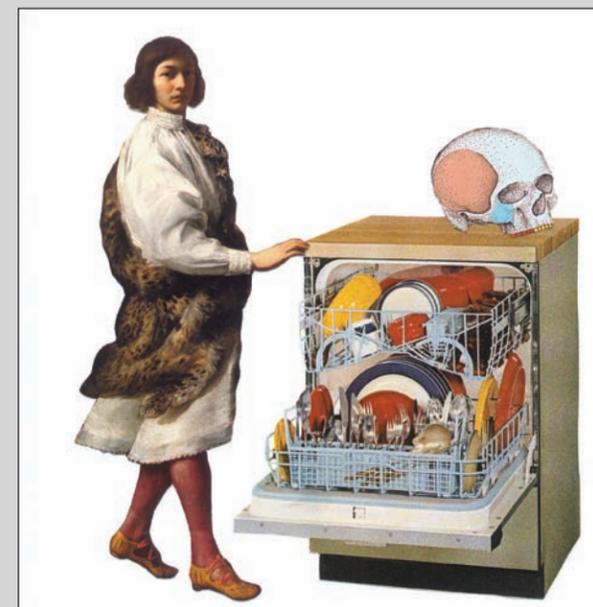
STEPHEN CHOPEK

“Chopek’s mixed media works take readily accessible materials and found objects out of their original context and reshape them into new compositions.”

Stephen Chopek (A.K.A. SodaCan) lives and works as a musician and artist in Jersey City, N.J. He is a multi-instrumentalist and self-taught artist. His work explores the connections that exist in the process of creating music and visual art.

Chopek’s music is the sum of many parts, what he terms “audio collage.” Individual elements are both created by the artist and sampled from previously existing sources. They are then gathered, categorized, arranged, dissected, deconstructed, sliced, diced, manipulated, repeated, rearranged, recycled, reused, and molded into original compositions.

He also applies the collage technique to visual art and poetry. Chopek’s mixed media works take readily accessible materials and found objects out of their original context and reshapes them into new compositions. □



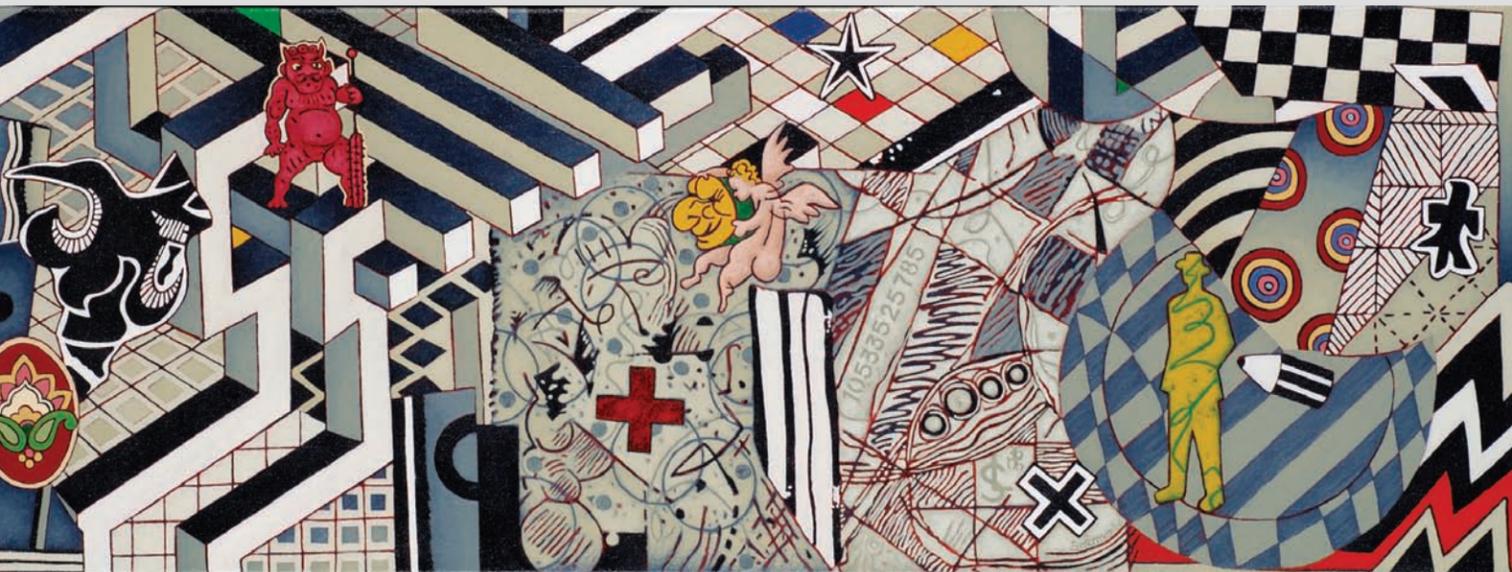
Stephen Chopek, *Domestic*, 2008. Collage on paper, 7 x 7 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Stephen Chopek, *Beauty*, 2007. Collage on paper, 7 x 7 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

D. JACK SOLOMON

Dominique Nahas

It is true to say that every artwork is autobiographical in nature, if not in intent. D. Jack Solomon's *Funny Paper*, *Mell O Drama*, and *Abstraction* paintings are characterized by compositional rigor, ornate inventiveness, and sensory playfulness. They are Solomon's way of creating complex, interwoven, and metaphysically expansive universes. □

www.djacksolomon.com



D. Jack Solomon, *Melodrama #8*, 2006. Acrylic on canvas, 18 x 50 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

“D. Jack Solomon’s *Funny Paper*, *Mell O Drama*, and *Abstraction* paintings are characterized by compositional rigor, ornate inventiveness, and sensory playfulness.”

BONNIE GLORIS

www.bonniegloris.com

Of all the “unwholesome” tendencies human beings possess, sexuality is the most prominent of our animal instincts. Freud described a “Madonna-whore complex,” which pegs women as either virginal, maternal, and only desiring sex for procreation; or alternately promiscuous, dirty creatures engaging in sex for pleasure without remorse. The collage *Mother/Mistress*, represents this duality of female sexuality by uniting the upper half of a nude Bohemian woman’s body, her open arms conveying sexual availability, with the lower half of an old-fashioned matron, her hands crossed modestly over her groin. □

“The collage *Mother/Mistress*, represents this duality of female sexuality by uniting the upper half of a nude Bohemian woman’s body, her open arms conveying sexual availability, with the lower half of an old-fashioned matron...”



Bonnie Gloris, *Mother/Mistress*, 2010. Collage on paper, 20 x 16 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

NIINA COCHRAN

“These ink drawings and three-dimensional piece depict the turmoil that goes on inside all of ourselves when deliberating who to listen to and who to display to others.”

We all struggle with different selves. We try to figure out which is our “true” self and we indulge in our “dark” selves. These selves stem from our minds, attacking us through our thoughts. Throughout life we try to find an equilibrium; we try to find sanity. These ink drawings and three-dimensional piece depict the turmoil that goes on inside all of ourselves when deliberating who to listen to and who to display to others. □



Clockwise: Niina Cochran, *Headattack 3*, 2010. Ink, 4 x 3.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Niina Cochran, *Headattack 2*, 2010. Ink, 6 x 3.75 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Niina Cochran, *Headattack 4*, 2010. Nylon stocking, cotton, lentils, and thread, 2.5 x 3.75 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Niina Cochran, *Headattack 1*, 2010. Ink and acrylic, 5 x 5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

www.ninacochran.com

JORDAN EAGLES

These photographs are part of Jordan Eagles’ series *Hemosapien*. The series documents models covered in “blood light,” created by shining and enlarging patterns from translucent, preserved blood panels with overhead projectors into spaces and onto bodies. Through a self-invented process, Eagles suspends, encases, and permanently preserves animal blood salvaged from slaughterhouses in plexiglas and UV resin. This technique is designed to retain the blood’s natural colors and textures, and to expose its finite details. On the body, the “blood light” appears as new layers of skin, epidermal diseases, tattoos, and natural birthmarks. The materials and luminosity in Eagles’ new body of work relate to themes of corporeality, mortality, spirituality, and science—regenerating the blood as sublime. □

www.jordaneagles.com



Jordan Eagles, *Bloody Scotty and Nick*, 2009. C-print, 45 x 30 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

“On the body, the “blood light” appears as new layers of skin, epidermal diseases, tattoos, and natural birthmarks.”

KELLY VETTER

www.kellyvetter.com

In my recent work, I have explored the idea of layering, recycling, and reinterpretation. Included within this series are collage and paint, works on paper and wood, and the use of imagery of post-war American ideals and consumerism. Some ideas spring forth from a cliché or concept that expresses itself in allegory and rhythm. While work from a decade ago was obsessively rendered forms in ball point pen, new works employ unorthodox materials, such as vintage coloring book pages, Sears catalogue ads, and other "good ol' days" references. These works also include reworked paint by numbers and thrift store paintings, altered, obliterated, recycled, and reborn. They look to innocence lost, the ugly and beautiful Eden. □

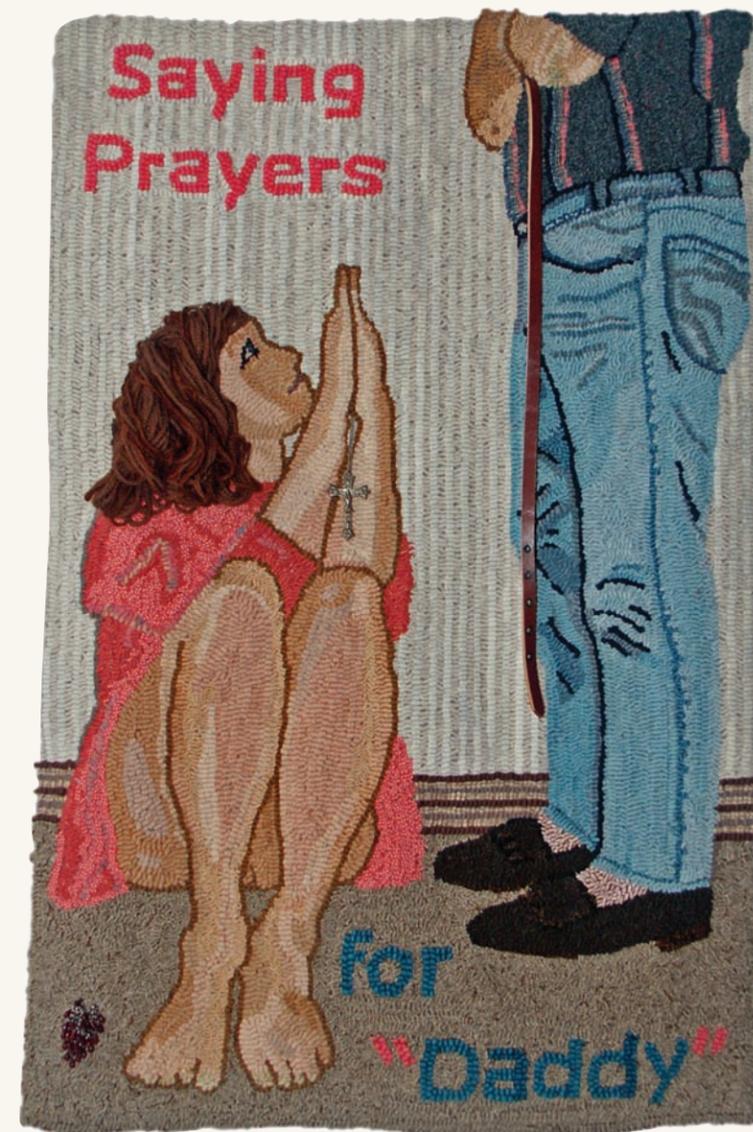


Kelly Vetter, *Lost Love*, 2009. Paint and pencil on vintage photo, 3 x 3 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

“Like private diary pages, these visual fragments are past and present ideas that look at the genre and social philosophy of what it means to be a woman today.”

LINDA RAE COUGHLIN

www.theatrugs.com



Linda Rae Coughlin, *Saying Prayers for Daddy*, 2010. Contemporary hooking: hand dyed recycled fabric strips hooked into a linen foundation, embellished with hand-dyed felt, beads, metal cross, and leather belt, 36 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

“...within this series are collage and paint, works on paper and wood, and the use of imagery of post-war American ideals and consumerism.”

When one thinks of fiber art, what comes to mind is “women’s work.” Rooted in feminism, these pieces look at women and the issues and events that challenge their lives. In this series, you will always find a woman, and/or a word, phrase, or symbol that expresses feelings about a particular experience, symbolic of my desire for women to always have their own voice. Like private diary pages, these visual fragments are past and present ideas that look at the genre and social philosophy of what it means to be a woman today.

My art is about capturing my intuitive guidance and having the strength to follow its direction, wherever it may lead, even if society may not feel comfortable with some of the issues I raise.

All of the pieces in this *women* series were created from recycled and discarded clothing, which was donated to me from family members and friends. The clothing was washed, dismantled, and hand-dyed with acid dyes. The cloth was then cut into strips and hooked into a linen foundation using the technique of traditional rug hooking. Each piece was then embellished with some or all of the following items: hand and needle felting, hand and machine embroidery, sewing, crinoline fabrics, beads, feathers, and trim. □

LAU GALLICO KLOHE

“The main concept being that of woman as a streamlined, dangerous vixen that can exist as both a symbol of beauty and wonder, yet simultaneously as one of danger, deception, and borderline evil.”

The inspiration for my *Salome* series of paintings is based off the juxtaposition of woman as both the ethereal goddess and cruel heartless mistress. The subject-matter is based upon the Biblical story of Salome, King Herod’s daughter who requested John the Baptist’s head on a silver platter. The main concept is women portrayed as a streamlined, dangerous vixen that can exist as both a symbol of beauty and wonder, yet simultaneously as one of danger, deception, and borderline evil. In almost all of these paintings, the figure is flanked by silhouettes of reptiles, which personally fascinate and frighten me, similar to the story of Salome.

In speaking of technique, during the course of these paintings, my intention was to let go of my more rigid oil painting application and focus almost exclusively on retaining a transparency with the actual medium. The washes built up from nearly nothing into opaque black, contrasted against a very simple, yet fitting (for a princess), solid gold background. □

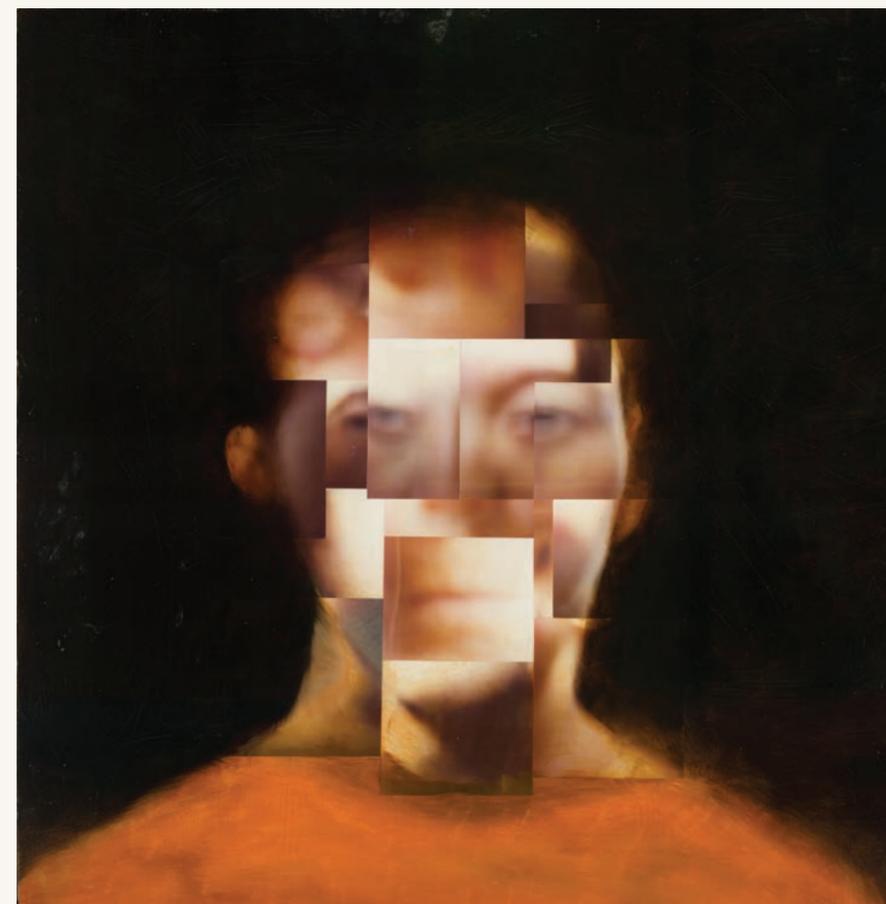
www.laugallico.com



Lau Gallico Klohe, *Salome I*, 2010. Acrylic on wood, 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Lau Gallico Klohe, *So Good to See You*, 2010. Acrylic on wood, 30 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



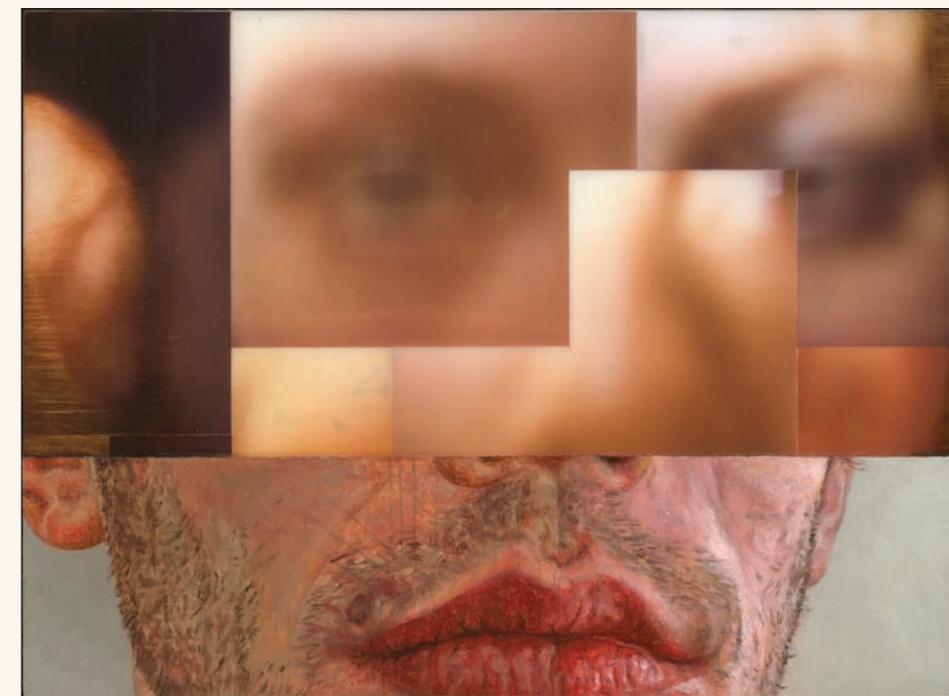
Chang Park, *Untitled #1*, 2008. Mixed media on wood, 18 x 18 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

CHANG PARK

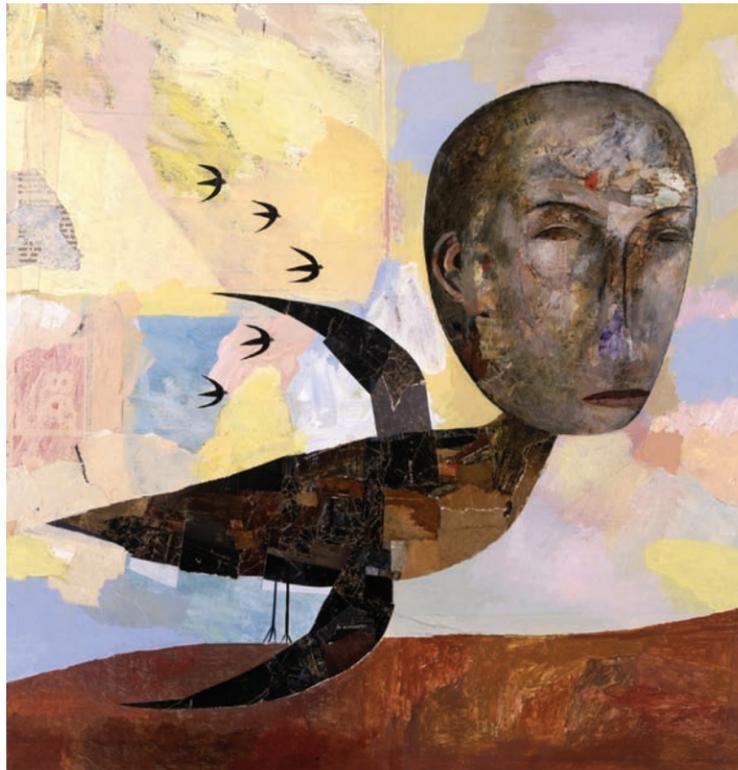
“This series of paintings originated from my interest and fascination in the Fayum mummy portraits of the dead, a representation of the physical body as a hollow shell that houses one’s true self.”

This series of paintings originated from my interest and fascination in the Fayum mummy portraits of the dead, a representation of the physical body as a hollow shell that houses one’s true self. My intention with this series was to approach each portrait as a hollow object or an artifact, like pieces of a puzzle, that invites the viewer to fill in the hollow space that defines the self. □

www.illoz.com/changpark



Chang Park, *Untitled #2*, 2008. Mixed media on wood, 10 x 14 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Jordin Isip, *Migration*, 2002. Mixed media on paper, 22 x 22 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

The colorful and haunting paintings by Jordin Isip incorporate scraps of litter, trash, discarded magazines, and other detritus of New York City streets, resulting in images that are just as much about the art-making process as they are about the allegories he presents. Though these narratives are based on personal experiences and obsessions, they retain an ambiguity through symbolism and multiple layers of meaning, leaving them open to interpretation by the viewer. Isip's iconic figures, simultaneously primitive and urban, tell of the human condition: conflicted, chaotic, and insular. □



Jordin Isip, *Wishful Thinking*, 2002. Mixed media on paper, 47 x 47 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

JORDIN ISIP

www.jordinisip.com

“Isip’s iconic figures, simultaneously primitive and urban, tell of the human condition: conflicted, chaotic, and insular.”

“Each sketchbook is regarded as an ongoing, comprehensive, single work of art.”

GEORGE BATES

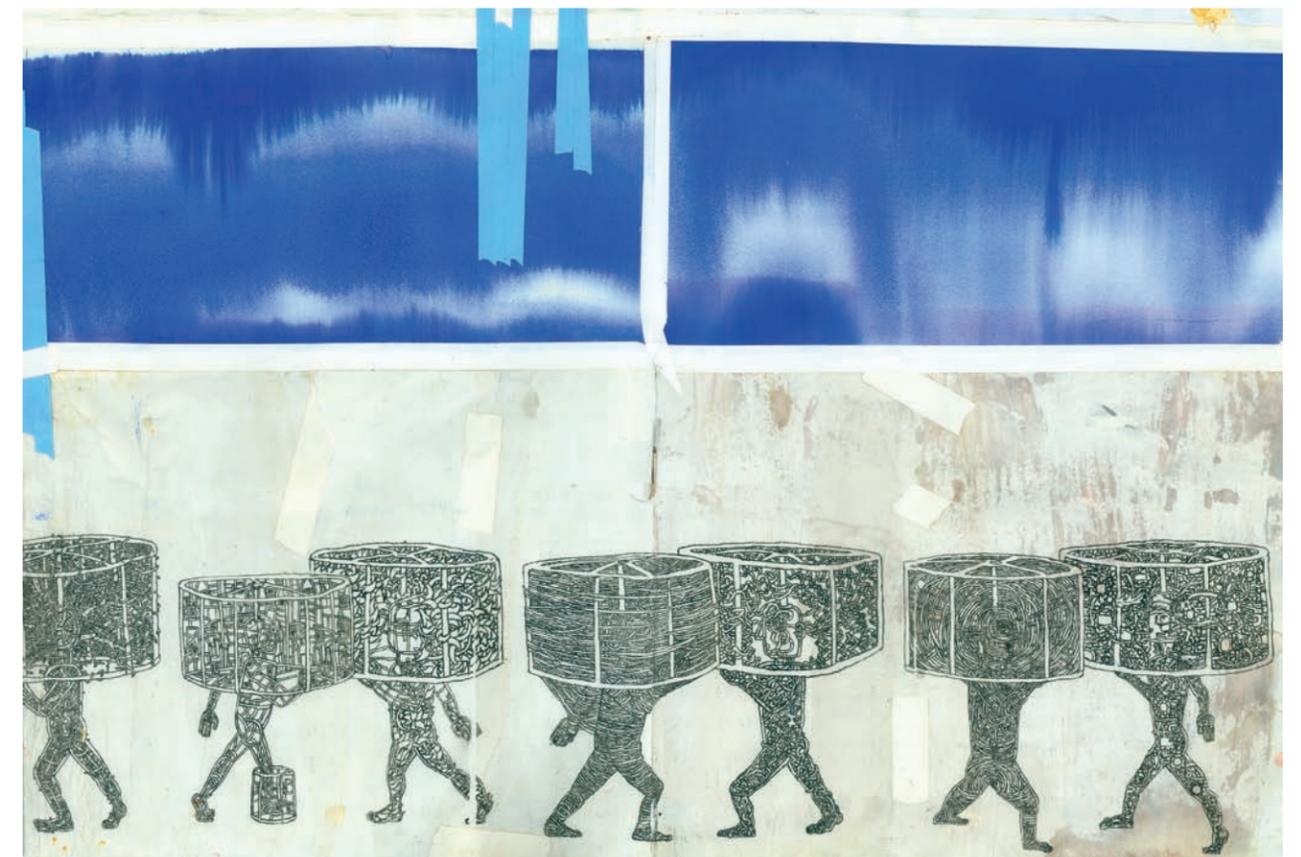
www.georgebatesstudio.com

All of my work emanates from a restless experimentation. Often this experimentation is at its most diverse and expressive in my sketchbooks. Each sketchbook is regarded as an ongoing, comprehensive, single work of art. Recently this experimentation has led to a permanent public art commission for the N.Y.C. Metropolitan Transportation Authority that will be installed in June 2011, as two facing, glass block walls, in the 36th Street subway station in Far Rockaway, Queens.

Cognition began as an exploration of the question of will versus the limits of possibility in the face of the idealized dream of unlimited potential. *Costa Rica/Comida* came about while I was surfing in Costa Rica every day. I would eat at this roadside restaurant operated by this woman and her daughter. I was struck with how the jungle was relentlessly encroaching upon the surroundings, the minimal barrier and distinction between indoors and outdoors, and how these very sweet and open people lived with the tensions of the intruding jungle, environmental violence, surrounding poverty, and what is perceived as the natural and seductive beauty of their surroundings.

The Protagonist began as an exploration of the question of how each individual sees themselves as the protagonist in their own lives and how these distinct projections act upon the self and with others, the environment, and the limits of these constructs.

□



George Bates, *The Protagonist*, 2006. Mixed media in sketchbook, 35 x 28 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Nathan Pickett, *Prey for Me*, 2009. Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 72 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

NATHAN PICKETT

www.nathanpickett.com

I combine painting techniques with intricate paper cutting, stencils, patterns and line, and spray painting to create mixed-media compositions that depict the tension and contradictions inherent in our human struggle.

Primitive societies relied on mythological creation stories to order their lives through art and narrative. By contrast, the overwhelming flood of billboards, signs, symbols, and other visual imagery in our modern lives reflect a world of chaos that leaves many of us feeling afraid and alienated.

My narratives are my personal response to these feelings and when I begin to work on the particularly labor-intensive elements of my compositions, such as cutting lace. I am drawn into the creative process and away from the experience of a separate self, beyond what is known and real lies that metaphysical domain where ancient traditions and contemporary imagery coexist.

My compositions reflect what I learn while exploring this space, and represent a synthesis of the fears and anxieties of our collective unconscious with the hope and wisdom of our mythological stories. I attempt to render my observations with sufficient humility and ambiguity to allow viewers to reflect on the themes for themselves. □

“My compositions reflect what I learn while exploring this space, and represent a synthesis of the fears and anxieties of our collective unconscious with the hope and wisdom of our mythological stories.”

TIM OKAMURA

www.timokamura.com

The paintings featured in Tim Okamura's *Urban Portrait* series emerge from a lifelong fascination with the expressive power of the human face combined with an intense interest in the juxtaposition of man and his environment. Inherent in Okamura's double portraits is an implied narrative, open to individual interpretation. These portraits pose questions about the relationship of the figures to one another and the profound effect of proximity to another person, regardless of physical interaction.

Okamura is interested in the portrait as a dignified symbol of life and perseverance, as well as the unexpected organic vibrancy of urban settings that often include worn stone facades and rusting metal doors, portraying both strength and the possibility of shelter. Okamura is fully immersed in exploring the relationship between ethnicity, social identity, race, and urban sub-culture, as well as the influences of hip-hop and graffiti. Through his paintings Okamura explores whether these forms of expression are to be considered vandalism or a cultural phenomenon of social significance and artistic importance. They are, perhaps, serving as a historical record of modern existence, another manifestation of human impulse: to literally leave one's mark, something that dates back to the first cave paintings. □

“Okamura is fully immersed in exploring the relationship between ethnicity, social identity, race, and urban sub-culture, as well as the influences of hip-hop and graffiti.”



Tim Okamura, *Secret Self*, 2010. Oil, mixed media on canvas, 88 x 80 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

ROGER SAYRE

www.rogersayre.com

This piece combines primitive photography with meditation, collaboration, and endurance. *Sitting* consists of a very large custom-made pinhole camera that sits in the middle of a gallery, a chair, and a set of lights on a timer. Subjects make an appointment to sit for a portrait during the exhibition. An exposure takes one hour. The subject sits, meditating on their own image in a mirror mounted on the front of the camera. *Sitting* is as much about the participants' collaboration and perseverance as it is about the actual portraits that result. To sit for a portrait is an individual and personal act, and is essential to truly experience the piece. The sitter is, in essence, on exhibit in the gallery during the time they are sitting for their one-hour exposure.

The resulting portraits, in addition to harkening back to an earlier era of photography, resonate with a likeness of the sitter that is possibly truer than the traditional fraction-of-a-second photograph or snapshot. One cannot hold any single expression for the span of an hour; instead, all expressions are merged into one image. The sitter's essence, distilled over time, is revealed. □



Roger Sayre, *Eric* (from the *Sitting Series – One Hour Exposures*), 2008. C-Print from paper negative, 24 x 20 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Roger Sayre, *Tim* (from the *Sitting Series – One Hour Exposures*), 2008. C-Print from paper negative, 24 x 20 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

“Sitting is as much about the participants’
collaboration and perseverance as it is about the
actual portraits that result.”



Roger Sayre, *Elizabeth* (from the *Sitting Series – One Hour Exposures*), 2007. C-Print from paper negative, 24 x 20 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



Photo credit: Adam Snyder

SPLIT PERSONALITIES

Eric Sullivan

In her New York curatorial debut, Broadway Gallery's Bonnie Gloris has assembled a show titled *Nature Vs. Nurture*—works from 15 artists (including one work of her own) in which the theme of the duality between humans' civilized lives and our more untamed selves is questioned, and in many cases upended.

"I am interested in the wild versus domestic sides of human nature," Gloris said recently. "The tendency to place labels on people, both male and female, and neatly fit them into certain categories, is something that frustrates me." In this wide-ranging show that includes varied subject matter, techniques, and media, she has assembled a group of artists whose works offer up the ambiguities that exist in the middle of our domesticity and primitive urges.

Some pieces approach the theme rather literally by paring human bodies with animalistic elements. Jordan Isip's mixed-media piece *Migration* depicts a man's head—devoid of expression aside from a nearly imperceptible frown—atop an avian body. Similarly, Kelly Vetter's *Lost Love* is a portrait of an elegant woman whose face is obscured by a large white butterfly, its patterned wings mimicking the skeletal outline of her nose and teeth. These images are grotesque—in the best sense of the word—and suggest the animalistic emotional states of their subjects.

Jordan Eagles' shocking images evoke our wild compulsions in a more abstract manner. His C-prints of bodies covered in caked blood—we

are told that the real stuff was used—evoke a sense of deterioration, almost decomposition, of violence and vulnerability. One is reminded of the forensic documentation of a crime scene, bodies haunted by the black background that engulfs them. Whereas one of his two images on display reveals a supine body that exudes loneliness and "a docility in the nearly fetal position" says Gloris, his other shows two upright bodies in embrace. If they are holding each other for the sake of love or fear is unclear; but with Gloris' brilliant contrast, one is reminded that a life with another is better than one spent alone.

Like in Eagles' images, the works in *Nature Vs. Nurture* often allude to violence. Greg Brickey's *Untitled* depicts a boy in a baseball cap, defensively holding a baseball bat against his chest. According to Gloris, this work is "brimming with malice... It shows a clear contrast between the expectation of 'good' behavior imposed by society, and our wild natural instincts to smash it all to hell." Such works imply humans' savage

state of nature, what philosopher Thomas Hobbs' described as "a war as is of every man against every man."

Roger Sayre's C-prints were created using a pinhole camera and an exposure time of one hour—a process through which, in the artist's words, "The sitter's essence, distilled over time, is revealed." In effect, the subjects appear slightly out of focus with a look of aggressiveness bubbling beneath the surface, as if in letting the camera run for so long, an animalistic side rises to the fore. Philosophically, it's a not too distant cousin of the Cubist paintings of Braque and Picasso.

The mixed-media, chopped-and-screwed head portraits by Chang Park more directly evoke these 20th-century masters' revolutionary approach to portraiture—an attempt to see the subject of study simultaneously from multiple angles. Viewing these images brings forth a sense of unsettlement and chaos.

Stephen Chopek's work also harkens back to historical imagery, but combines elements of modern consumerism as well, and in doing so presents absurd and farcical incongruities. *Gloris* includes two of his collages: one that represents a human skull smeared with garish red lipstick, and another that portrays a man in centuries-old European clothing resting his hand on a dishwasher. In a playful way, we are reminded of both the progress civilization has made (if such things can be measured by beauty and cleaning products), and that the accumulated wisdom of thousands of generations that are within each of us.

Feminine duality and male hegemony are explored in particularly compelling ways. Gloris' own *Mother/Mistress*, according to the artist, "represents [the] duality of female sexuality by uniting the upper half of a nude Bohemian woman's body, her open arms conveying sexual availability, with the lower half of an old-fashioned matron, her hands crossed modestly over her groin." Though the figure is split in two, she is balanced and embodies both wildness and a calm motherliness. D. Jack Solomon's *Funny Paper #66* portrays a man in business attire, his face split down the middle, with a prototypical housewife on one side and a nude woman on the other—guess which of the two women he's facing. This, and his two other works in the show, are "riddled with little symbols representing the dual aspects of human nature," says Gloris.

Linda Rae Coughlin's dyed-fabric wall hangings are folksy and almost childlike in their structural simplicity, but the content of the images is anything but: depictions of emotional abuse, looming domestic violence, and a woman's fight to be free from male domination. The renderings, however crude, inscribe women's perseverance into the material weaves.

The varied works in *Nature Vs. Nurture* reconsider the "wild vs. domestic" dialectic commonly assumed to be our core state of being. Gloris and her selected artists implore the viewer to extrapolate ways in which this dominant mode of thinking has prevailed. One may ask: how can such rote notions be broken? There are no easy answers, and this show does not intend to provide one; instead it allows the viewers to reexamine assumptions about their inner selves, and this is the best we can hope art will do. □

"The varied works in *Nature Vs. Nurture* reconsider the "wild vs. domestic" dialectic commonly assumed to be our core state of being. Gloris and her selected artists implore the viewer to extrapolate ways in which this dominant mode of thinking has prevailed."



Photo credit: Adam Snyder



Photo credit: Augusto Menezes



Photo credit: Adam Snyder



Photo credit: Adam Snyder