

Peggy PREHEIM

Don't Look Now

September 4- October 4, 2008

Opening reception: Thursday September 4, 6-8pm

Gallery two

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present its tenth solo exhibition with Peggy Preheim. Titled *Don't Look Now*, the show is comprised of new drawing, sculpture and photography, and takes its title from the 1973 film directed by Nicholas Roeg, starring Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland. Set on the canals of Venice, the movie explores themes of love and loss and the psychological effects of tragedy, as a couple becomes involved in a mysterious chain of events surrounding the drowning of their daughter. Preheim references the biblical, art historical, mythological, and supernatural symbolism found in the film, and elaborates upon the way that these themes and motifs have been represented in her own past work. At once expanding and refining the scope of Preheim's artistic inquiry these new pieces experiment formally with scale and material while simultaneously delving deeper into familiar topics of importance for Preheim: the imagery of childhood, the passing and cycling of time, familial connection and rupture, and the experience of the natural world. The resulting presentation is both delicate and powerful, and each element is exquisitely rendered.

Known for working on an almost miniature scale, the majority of Preheim's drawings occupy only a small portion of the page, pulling the viewer in, as the eye travels over the blank space to reach an arrestingly detailed figure. In *Don't Look Now* Preheim heightens this effect by enlarging her surface, using sheets of drawing paper almost four times the size of her signature 14 x 11 inch pieces but keeping the drawings themselves quite small. Preheim describes this shift toward a larger surface as central to the exhibition, explaining, "*Don't Look Now* explores the relations between the figure(s) and the larger paper in terms of overall meaning as well as scale and perspective. The first drawing in this series, 'Little Princess,' presents an image of a flag. Two key points—the location where the flag pole is planted and the point on which the eagle rests—set the stage for the drawings that follow." Installed in the side gallery as a diptych, "Little Princess" introduces several recurring elements found in subsequent drawings, and in Preheim's sculptures as well. The stars and stripes of the flag are echoed in the constellation surrounding the girls walking together in "Zodiac" and in the striped cloth used in each of the sculptures. Gazing up toward the ornamental eagle which has been separated from its flag post, the girl in "Little Princess" turns away from the viewer, looking toward the interior of the page, as do the figures in "Miss Match" and "Knight Mare."

Both "Knight Mare" and the drawing "Check-mate," were already in process when Preheim saw Roeg's film, and both resonated with imagery found in the movie. Preheim describes "Check-mate" as revealing, "... a suspended figure of a young woman projecting a reflective shadow topped off by a conical hood looming above her. The image relates to a scene from the film in which a corpse is being retrieved from a canal in Venice and here it is fused by the shadow of her murderer, a daemonic dwarf identified by the conical hood. This adds another dimension to the reading of 'Check-mate.' To me, it suggested the overturning of both the king and the queen, which might indicate a shift in the current social hierarchy. It is intriguing that the serial killer who is revealed at the end of the movie is a composite of the major figures in *Little Red Riding Hood*, a theme that has appeared in my previous work, leaving the plot to thicken."

The six new sculptures included in the exhibition, installed in the side gallery, echo works presented in *Facing Time*, Preheim's 2007 exhibition at the gallery. Each of these new sculptures includes blue and white striped ticking fabric, which Preheim explains "alludes to a tower or the spoke of a web, as in 'Babel,' furthering the idea of a timeline between myth and history." A combination of delicate materials, glass, crystal and white clay, each of these works references others in the show, creating cohesion across Preheim's different media.

Don't Look Now coincides with a major survey exhibition of Preheim's work titled, *Little Black Book*, at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield Connecticut, which will be on view through February, 2009. A catalog published in

conjunction with the exhibition by the Aldrich and Gregory R. Miller & Co. is available through the gallery. *Little Black Book* will travel from the Aldrich to the Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa Oklahoma, and to the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University. Other recent exhibitions for Preheim include *Facing Time*, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, 2007 (solo); *New Directions in American Drawing*, The Columbus Museum, Columbus, Georgia; traveling to Telfair Museum, Savannah, Georgia, and Knoxville Museum of Art, Tennessee, 2007-2008 (group); *Transitional Objects: Contemporary Still Life*, Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York, 2006 (group); and *Past Presence, Childhood and Memory*, The Whitney Museum at Atria, 2005 (group); among others.

For further information please contact the gallery at info@tanyabonakdargallery.com or 212-414-4144.