

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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Cindy Workman

les demoiselles

January 25-March 3, 2007
Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm

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Large Woman 18, 60-3/8 x 45-7/8"



Large Woman 17, 60-7/8 x 45-7/8"

Cindy Workman breaks new ground in her current series of works devoted to images of women. The figures are large, frontal, and conceptually at the center of the compositions to a greater degree than in her previous works. The works are inkjet prints made by the artist in her studio as unique works.

From the immense range of images of women available via photographs, publications and online, Workman has harvested hers from the recent past. Drawings from the envelopes of sewing patterns provide idealized girls, demure in their frocks and bows, while soft-core nudes offer prominent breasts and come-hither poses. Adjusted in scale and digitally collaged, the source images yield conjoined figures of mixed identity. Through a delicately calibrated range of opacity and transparency, the illustrated girls and photographed women vie for dominance in these figures. Despite the duality of their woman-child appearance, however, they appear more fully as individuals than Workman's earlier evocations of female archetypes. These portraits are powerful presences.

In the early 1990s and before the scanner, computer and large-format printer became her chosen tools, Workman used traditional collage and assemblage methods to examine socially assigned and culturally reinforced gender identities. Her series "The American Family" incorporated photographs of her own family with images of Popeye, Superman and their female counterparts in constructions of impeccable design and execution. Referring to these works, she asks:



Large Woman 7, 59-1/8 x 45-7/8"



Large Woman 19, 32-3/4 x 33-1/2"



Pink Nude, 42 x 52"

What does it really mean to be a “mother” and how is that different from being a “wife” or “sister” or “daughter” or one cohesive “self” incorporating all of these fragmented identities? Because identity constantly changes and shifts depending on whom a person is interacting with and what role is being played, reality can never be fully realized in one instant and is constantly being reinvented.

Freed from the constraints of physical assemblage, Workman has been able to generate more complex, nuanced compositions and has availed herself of a wider range of sources and references. For a time the work became more sexually explicit, about which she says, “I have been exploring the influence of sexual experience on identity and self-esteem. Individual reactions to and interpretations of sexual experience become inextricably linked to a person’s core identity.”

Workman’s compositions are inflected with the style and appearance of classic Pop-art era works and enriched with ideas associated with postmodern appropriation. Woven into her current works are multiple strands of inquiry about issues as diverse as age-appropriate appearance, plastic surgery, the questionable truthfulness of photography and technologies of printed reproduction. At a time when the internet provides virtual reality in online societies such as Second Life where participants create and furnish avatars with whatever identity they wish, Workman reflects upon the degree to which our freedom to construct an identity is shaped and restricted, by social and historical boundaries.

Cindy Workman was born in New York in 1961, and received a BFA at the State University of New York at Purchase and an MFA at the Chelsea School of Art in London. She had her first solo exhibition in New York at Muranushi Lederman Productions in 1994, her second in Berlin at Galerie Michael Fuchs in 1996, and has exhibited at Lennon, Weinberg in 1998, 2000 and 2003. Her works have been included in such group exhibitions as *Naughty* at Marymount Manhattan’s Hewitt Gallery of Art, 2005; *Terrible Danger Ahead!* at the Pelham Art Center, 2004; *Sexy Beasty* at Raid Project in Los Angeles, 2004; *Digital Printmaking Now* at the Brooklyn Museum, 2001; and *Manly* at Art in General, 2000.