

Cindy Workman

Cohen, David. "The Powers of the Flesh." The New York Sun, February 1, 2007.

THE NEW YORK SUN
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2007
GALLERY-GOING

The Powers of the Flesh

By DAVID COHEN

"Les demoiselles," Cindy Workman's exhibition of elaborately constructed digital prints, extends the line of inquiry established in her last show at the same gallery. She described the work in "POST porn ISM" as being a "smart-slash-sexy way of looking at the whole women-as-object thing." Her cute, sleazy images of flesh and femininity are artful and kitsch, alluring and repugnant in equal degrees.

Ms. Workman uses digital technology in her large, gaudily colored, unique inkjet prints to splice together layers of female representation. Besides "Blue Nude" and "Pink Nude" of 2007, they are all from her "Large Woman" series of 2006. She principally harvests from two fields: illustrations and cartoons of idealized young girls, mostly culled from the packaging of sewing pattern kits of the 1950s and soft pornography of the next decade. The squeaky-clean inno-

cence of the one and the raunch of the other meld uncomfortably, as they ought. In this respect, technology, artistry, and ideology are on the same page.

This might sound like heavy-duty, old-school feminism, but Ms. Workman's images are much more ambiguous than critical. The personages have the otherworldly, vaguely occult feel of a late John Graham painting. Butterflies flutter across several prints, reminders that a weird mix of artifice and fleshiness is as prevalent in nature as it is in art.

In a formal sense, Ms. Workman's is a poetics of misregistration. The video sculptor Tony Oursler is brought to mind by the way she disconcertingly fuses flatness and volume: In Ms. Workman's "Large Woman 18," for instance, where breasts hang out of a prim frock and a demure pink arm distends from the black woman's flesh within.

CINDY WORKMAN: Les demoiselles

Lennon, Weinberg, Inc.

Workman until March 3 (514 W. 25th St., between Tenth and Eleventh avenues, 212-941-0012).