

The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 2004
E32

'Relentless Proselytizers'

Feigen
535 West 20th Street, Chelsea
Through Aug. 14

"Make it extreme!" might have been the advice given to the 12 artists in this invigorating exhibition organized by David Hunt. Almost all the participants share a penchant for formal and narrative hyperbole.

Matthew Day Jackson's life-size Viking funeral ship with a hull of wood-grained vinyl, a sail of stitched-together T-shirts and an ornate hippie-goth costume laid out inside dreams absurdly of a time when artists were warriors. Aggressively absurd as well is a gothic horror of a gynecological examination table assembled by Jesse Bercowetz and Matt Bua from all kinds of junk, including flashing lights and whirring motors.

Gina Dawson's primitivistic tableau of three people and a horse, all made of oozy gray and white resin and titled "Tex Ritter, John Ritter, White Flash & Me," is hilariously gross; Jay Battle's Plexiglas coffin containing credit cards impaled on a glowing red neon tube makes an incisive anticapitalist statement; and Ben Beaudoin's fat, decapitated python painted with cartographic signs and camouflage might be an allegory of military-industrial globalism.

As for two-dimensions, a large, assiduously detailed watercolor by Ben Blatt depicts a fascinating, Jules Vernian fusion of nature and machinery. Elizabeth Huey's abrasively raw paintings envision the mystical, Henry Dargeresque adventures of fashion models in Bavarian forests. And SunTek Chung contributes a big, slick photographic self-portrait as a Ninja cricket player.

Rounding out the show are Adam Helm's finely detailed drawings of a masked soldier and a jack rabbit; a psychedelic convergence of video, dance and cello music by Chris Rodrigues; and curiously repellent, semiabstract figurative paintings by Haavard Homstvedt.

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