

01/2007 - ARTFORUM

AIR DE PARIS

December 2/2006 – January 20/2007

Rob Pruitt, Mirka Lugosi, Thorsten Streichardt



While not meant to be a group show—each artist has her or his distinct space—this exhibition is a visually engaging study in contrasts, so it is worth considering as a whole. Rehabilitated art-world bad-boy Rob Pruitt presents new paintings: glittering fuchsia and red acrylic splashes on silver panels, like *Feux d'artifice* (Fireworks), 2006, or *Éclair* (Lightning), 2006. These ethereal, decorative surfaces are grounded by sculptures made out of blue jeans (*Esprit du Corps*, 2006) and stuffed with cement, kapok, and bread dough (air-dried or baked in the famous Poilâne bakery ovens), which are positioned throughout the main space or propped up under or next to the paintings. Pruitt's light-handed reference to iconic Abstract Expressionism and his use of the quintessentially American item of clothing in these works comes off as an ambiguous, if not ambivalent, commentary on the long-consummated marriage of art and fashion.

From an entirely different planet, Mirka Lugosi's tiny gouaches and pencil drawings (all untitled and from 1997 to 2006) are populated by vampish girls and women—in various states of undress—who traffic with animals, shoes, and dismembered penises in spidery, delicate landscapes, spare interiors, or on kitschy postcards. Female desire nearly oozes from these microscopically detailed images, which manage to provide a refreshing take on Surrealist eroticism and fetishism. Finally, though it's surely unintentional, Thorsten Streichardt's *Eraserface*, 2006—the barely visible features of a face drawn with pink eraser on a wall behind the front desk—effectively embodies the tensions between immaterial and material, and abstract and figurative, that are so palpable in this show.

—Vivian Rehberg

Mirka Lugosi, *Untitled*, 2004, graphite on paper, 7 7/8 x 10 5/8».