



REVUE DE PRESSE

FAY KU

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H GALLERY

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Mnemonic play: Fay Ku

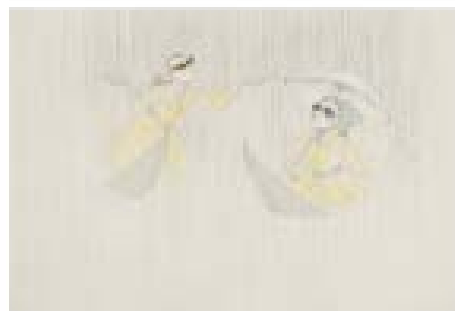
Adèle Oliveira | Posted: Friday, May 31, 2013 5:00 am

Fay Ku's exhibition *Are Nisi Masa*, which opens at Eight Modern on Friday, May 31, takes its title from Fellini's *8 1/2*. In the film, protagonist Guido Anselmi, an Italian movie director, remembers magic words he learned as a child to make a painting come alive at midnight — *are nisi masa*. In the course of chanting the phrase to herself, Ku remembered *not as nisi* and decided to keep the title based on her altered memory.

"It's mostly an emotional reference," Ku told *Parasite* from Brooklyn, where she is based. "When I recently watched *8 1/2*, I hadn't seen it for seven years, and I was thinking about how we shed our skin every seven years or how the cicadas come out every seven years or so, too. The first time I watched *8 1/2*, I wasn't super happy with my own work, and I thought the film was awful and self-absorbed. But when I watched it again, I thought it was brilliant. *Are nisi masa* is such a pivotal memory, and it's a catalyst for the rest of Guido's life."

Ku was born in Taiwan to Chinese immigrant parents, who moved to the U.S. shortly after her birth. After living with her grandmother, Ku joined her parents when she was 3 years old and spent her childhood moving between suburbs in Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, and Maryland. "My parents weren't very social, and we were isolated in many ways. Diversity was not cool at all growing up. At home, we spoke Mandarin and ate Chinese food, but it was very different than actual Chinese culture." Ku's sense of that culture beyond her own home in overwhelmingly white communities came mostly through stories. "The things that were not actually around me were translated through history, myth, and folklore."

Ku's work is unearthly and sublime, the stuff of dreams and nightmares. A mixture of watercolor, graphite, and ink on paper, Ku's drawings focus on figures engaged in surreal interactions with themselves and others. In *Two/Up*, two figures — half men, half birds — claw at each other with talon-like toenails and fingernails, their teeth bared in fury and pain. *Local Weather* is more subdued but no less disquieting. Five nearly identical women, dressed in yellow raincoats, languish with fishbowl on their heads. Their hair streams around their faces, and we wonder if they are drowning. *Lunchbox* is amusing and odd: here, we see no faces. Six pair of voluptuous legs and bottoms, clad in torn black stockings and vermilion high heels, are surrounded by about a dozen peacocks dressed in dapper pastel suits. The male appendages worship at the ankles of the lovely legs, or interact with one another, inclined as though in conversation, as they stroll across the grass. Ku's line is calligraphic and precise, but if you look at certain pieces (like *Rain or Shine*) up close, you can see where she crossed and started over, or pressed very hard and tore at the paper.



Fay Ku: "Rain or Shine"

Fay Ku: Rain or Shine, 2012, graphite, watercolor and ink on paper



"I draw on printmaking paper that's not actually meant for drawing, and you can't erase without abrading the surface. It also scars really easily with a hard pencil. Once I get too comfortable [with a material] I have to switch. When you're not thinking, 'How do I react to that mark?' and wonder what's happening, you're not playing with the material. Sometimes I think I'm a little too precious, a little too controlled, and should let go sometimes."

When Ku first started making art, she wanted to paint like Baroque artist Caravaggio. "I was trained in oils," she said. "And who wouldn't want to paint like Caravaggio?" It wasn't until she got to graduate school at New York's Pratt Institute that Ku realized she wasn't supposed to paint like Caravaggio. While the human psychological drama represented in his work still appealed to her, Ku's mode of expression was very different from Caravaggio's dense, chthonic paintings. "I really resisted drawing at first. I wasn't very sophisticated about contemporary art, and my notions about art were antiquated. I thought if Caravaggio is valid, then drawing isn't valid. I thought I wasn't supposed to make pencil-on-paper works because it was easy for me. But being easy didn't make it invalid; it was my natural way of working."

After graduate school, Ku moved from residency to residency in locales as diverse as Honolulu and Omaha. She completed two residencies in New Mexico — at the Santa Fe Art Institute in 2008 and Albuquerque's Tinamar Institute in 2009. Though she's happy now to be based in one place, moving left its mark on Ku's work. Her materials dwindled, and different landscapes influenced her presentation.

"The landscape of the Southwest really speaks to me. It's like a drawing in it looks like one of my works with washes of color, openness, and light." When Ku was at the Santa Fe Art Institute, she completed just one painting: the 16-foot long *Houses Without*, a group of fierce, one-breasted Amazonians in colorful Chinese dress taking on colorful horses across the canvas into battle. "I didn't know animals much, but horses. I had the physical horizontal space. I didn't understand this till years later, but my vision blew wide open, and that happened because I was there." ◀

details

▼ *May: Ku: Awa Niwa Maui*

▼ Opening reception 5 p.m. Friday, May 31; exhibition through July 14

▼ Eight Modern, 231 Delgado St., 990 0231



Birdfight

Fay Ku

Half and Half

Fay Ku's subjects are out of this world

by [Cecilia Lecomte](#)
by [Sofiane Simon](#)

Centuars, mermaids and Mischans have nothing on image maker **Fay Ku's** creations.

"It's a recurring motif I've done in the past," Ku says of her mythical, half-human/half-beast. She adds that the creatures aren't based on a specific person, but rather on an amalgamation of innate human values and ideas—an assemblage of sorts.

"Just like video game characters can embody different aspects of themselves each time you revisit them," Ku explains, her protagonists display different personalities.

"That one is still a little bit mysterious for me," Ku tells SFR of "Birdfight" (pictured).

The former Santa Fe art institute resident adds that the piece is also an observation on machines.

"I use the idea of a coin flip, because it's these machines that are turned against each other; it doesn't necessarily represent a particular person, just two purposes—two figures in a ritual," she says. "Anytime that there's a ritual, you're devoid of ego and personality, and you just become a vessel for drama."

Other pieces in the show continue her exploration of half-human/mythical. A fascination, she says, emanates from observing people incessantly play with their hair—one of her pet peeves.

her central femininity and how aggression can turn inwards.”

Ku looks for happiness within a feathered skull. “They were the first feminist monuments, because they wanted justice for women that had been wronged,” she says.

The quality of her creative process is also influenced by her multi-cultural upbringing as a child of Taiwanese immigrants who was raised in a white American suburb.

“It’s funny, because when I talk about it, I have to make it more black and white than it is,” she says. “It’s actually a lot more nuanced and complex.”

Ku reflects on her teenage years, “I never really entered mainstream American culture and never became 100-percent socialized.”

This Friday, she presents her latest body of work at Eight Modern in an exhibit called *Ass Ass Ass*, a misnomer derived from a scene in Federico Fellini’s *A²*, where Guido remembers the words from a childhood chant supposed to have the power to make eyes in paintings “come to life.”

“We watch, I saw the film and I didn’t get it,” Ku says. Upon rediscovering it as an adult, she unearthed the different layers of complexity behind making a mis-nickname. “The movie is about the process, and the process of making a movie is the movie.”

The sentiment transfers to her exhibit. “In some ways, the work that you see is me trying to figure out things,” she says.

“I don’t see the same right now, but over on, ‘I figure it out,’” Ku says of the show’s elements, referring to them as “little groups of figures that seem to be working together.”

“Sometimes, it takes me a little while to see them objectively,” she continues. “If you’re in it, you can in some ways never see it.”

She calls these moments “blind spots” that become apparent only in retrospect. “We’re constantly revising our own narrative; even if it’s a couple of years later, we’re different people.”

Ku finds that the breadth of her work is visible in *Ass Ass Ass*, though she let the viewer make up his or her own mind as “a lot of the times,” she jokes, “the artists themselves are not the highest ones.”

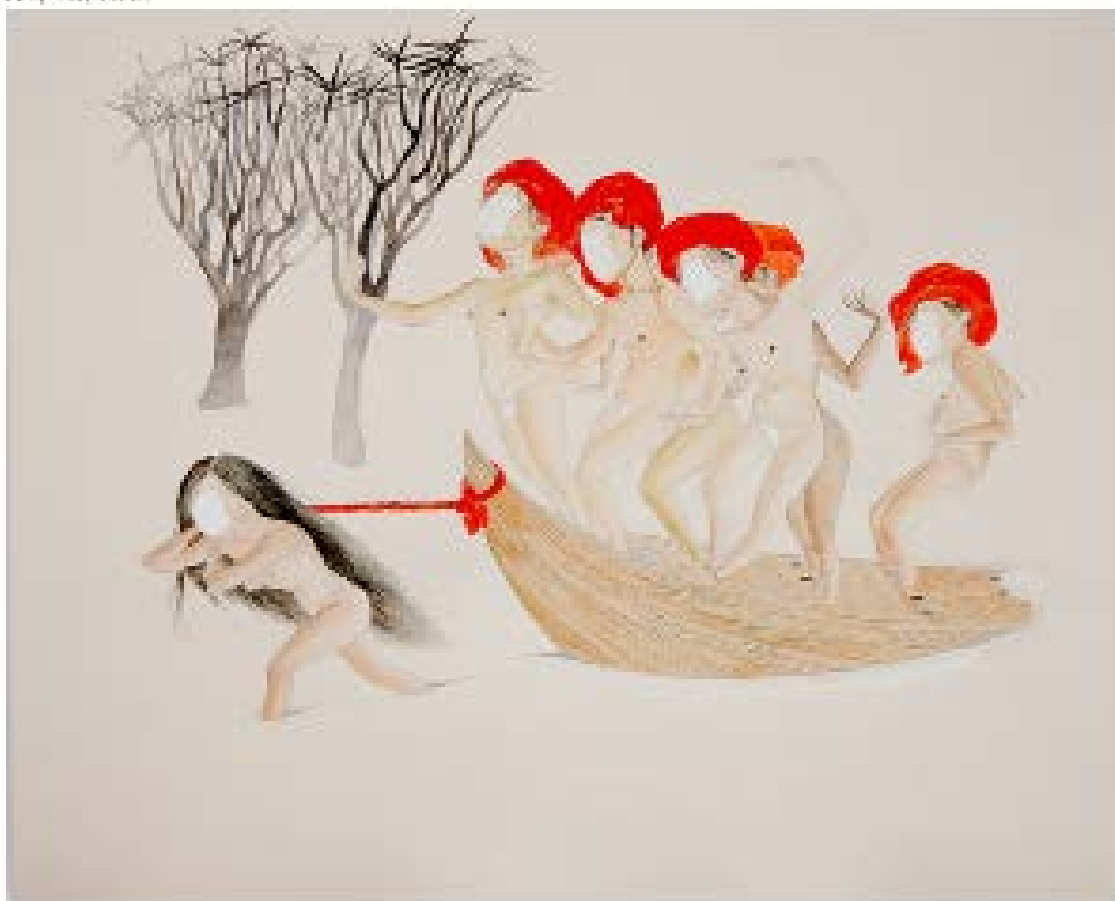
Box Art: *Ass Ass Ass*

5-7 pm Friday, May 31, Free

Eight Modern, 231 Delgado St., 995 0391

JUXTAPOZ**FRIEZE WEEK HIGHLIGHT: FAY KU
W/EIGHT MODERN @ PULSE**

May 13, 2013



One of our favorite artists we saw this weekend in NYC for Frieze and surrounding fairs was [Fay Ku](#) at the [Light Modern](#) booth in Pulse. Light Modern, based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, had a few strong pieces from the Taiwan born Ku, who has built a body of work on paper that "recalls the callousness and lack of empathy of children, who have not yet learned the customs and mores adults use to mask society's true savagery."



Culture Monster

ALL THE ARTS, ALL THE TIME

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Art review: Fay Ku at Sam Lee

FEBRUARY 3, 2011 | 5:00 PM



7



"Half Breeds," the title of Fay Ku's stirring show at Sam Lee, refers to two kinds of hybrid: the cross-species creature common to myth, and the hyphenated American. Born in Taipei and raised in the U.S. (she lives now in Brooklyn), Ku conjures up the frictions inherent to both types in drawings of uncommon fluidity. Ku's line has urgency, grace, dynamism and an animate, tensile strength. It brings to mind a mixed ancestry of its own, borrowing from Japanese woodcuts, classic fairy-tale illustration and perhaps even the high-contrast linearity of ancient Greek vase painting.

The most arresting works are drawn in gold on large sheets of black paper. "Owl Hunt II" (50½ by 59½ inches) shows a magnificent woman warrior, fiercely beautiful and epically tough, conquering a swarm of demonic owls with human faces. In gorgeous calligraphic line, Ku stages a scene that merges the theatrical and ornamental. Like all of her drawings, the image is mildly disturbing, invoking a violation of the presumed natural order.

In another fascinating piece, human and animal collide with some sort of dark, strategic intent, as grasshoppers lay their white, rice-like eggs in the hair and ear and knee-crook of a goddess of sorts, the human queen to an insect hive of fertile workers. Sexual hybridity charges this scene, and also "Last Garden," while "Assimilation" pictures a kind of self-imposed mutilation: Two mermaids bloodily split their tails to blend in with the two-legged, sacrificing one identity to lay claim to another. They mentor a second, pre-op pair, innocents succumbing to the call of the mainstream.

Not all of Ku's drawings soar. Some lapse into melodrama, and in some she dilutes the power of her pure line with efforts at texture and collage. At their best, the works are vexing visualizations of metamorphoses past and present, fictive and familiar.

-- Leah Ollman

Sam Lee Gallery, 990 N. Hill St. #190, (323) 227-0275, through Feb. 19. Closed Sunday through Tuesday. <http://www.samleegallery.com/>

Image: Fay Ku, "Owl Hunt II," Sam Lee Gallery

Alibi
- 7, 18 rue de l'Éclaircie - Courcouronnes, 91000

Gallery Review

The Way of Ku

Fay Ku's Double Exposure at Eight Modern

By Julia Mandeville



Fay Ku, "Femelle," graphite, watercolor and ink on paper

If art is a means of self-education, consider artist Fay Ku Hsueh. "Double Exposure," her solo exhibition at **Eight Modern in SoHo La**, features nine recent works on paper. The majority are drawn and painted in conditions of graphite, ink and watercolor. Two of the pieces are lithographs, the breathtaking results of Ku's November residency at the **Lamont Institute in Allouagnepe**. Altogether, the collection communicates two opposing concepts: purity/modesty, solitude/association, fulfillment/affliction, elegance/diagnose – as balancing counterparts.



Fay Ku, "Fish," graphite, watercolor and ink on paper

The beauty of Ku's aesthetic is startling, as are the nature of her subjects and the acts she depicts. At first, it feels as though those elements – like the concepts Ku deals with – are inherently at odds with one another. But as one engages the work, it becomes clear that any initial bewilderment comes not from a sense of conflict, but from an unusual sense of equilibrium.

In "Fish Series," three androgynous boys perform provocative deeds with members of the Flores class as tools. Rendered in graphite, watercolor and ink on paper, each boy conveys a distinct emotion – disdain, tolerance and imitation. There is a matter-of-factness to the piece, to Ku's technique and presentation, that leaves a feeling of calm. Through their expressive, supple, melodic, the



actors are children and therefore endowed with innocence. They are mischievous, to be sure, but they are not guilty. Indeed, something about their experimentation seems universal, a representation of our collective and constant cycle of regression and evolution.

Ku achieves parity between subject and style. In "Sea Bed," the protagonist is a woman, a character who appears starkly modern. She is nude, swathed by the bed of fishes which she lies. Her visible ear reveals multiple piercings; neatly every appendage bears a ring or bracelet. Her face and form betray a distinctly contemporary indifference. Yet the style—the singular focus of the composition and the fluidity of Ku's pencil and brush strokes—brings to mind traditional Chinese scroll painting. Through this particular fusion of imagery and aesthetic, Ku causes a reverberation within the viewer; it's exquisite and memorable.

Their experimentation seems universal, a representation of our collective and constant cycle of regression and evolution.

Prior to her November residency at Lamand, the Brooklyn-based Ku noted that her work would likely "lend itself quite well to printmaking." As it turns out, the translation is stunning. The product of two weeks' collaboration with **Master Printer Bill Lagutina**, Ku's premier lithographs seem a natural and vibrant extension of her previous works on paper. The editions of "Sea Change" and "Mermaid in Flight," both of which debut at *Double Exposure*, are comprised of 20 numbered (andable) impressions each. These works represent an arduous, but profoundly productive, two weeks in Albuquerque.

"Mermaid in Flight" is especially fantastic. Ku's customary characters are present—human, bird, fish—in this illustration of an ethereal but watched maiden with wings of peacock feathers, a tail of fish scales and the halo of a heavenly being. "Mermaid in Flight" is an ornately designed, five-color image with a silver leaf overlay. Lithography is a process of meticulous standards, requiring the expertise and precision of a printer like Lagutina. After he completed the chemical transfer of Ku's original image to a stone plate, Lagutina inked and printed each color individually—registering the plate to the paper exactly, each and every time, for all of the impressions in the edition. Ku and Lagutina's partnership is rooted in each artist's mastery of his and her form, and it's apparent; "Mermaid in Flight" and "Sea Change" are masterpieces.

Ku's characters are archetypes, embodiments of those incongruous concepts that exist within us.

The scope of *Double Exposure*—relatively limited at nine works—is due to Ku's participation in numerous current exhibitions; the artist's ubiquity means that her available portfolio is restricted. But this isn't a bad thing. We are permitted to focus on each piece, to observe the relationships between them and the decisions among them, to reflect on the artist's meaning and to establish our perspective on the work.

Ku's characters are archetypes, embodiments of those incongruous concepts that exist within us. After emigrating from Taiwan to America at age 3, Ku grew up in a world where her familial heritage and cultural surroundings often clashed. Though this circumstance was personally isolating (by the artist's description), it might well be responsible for her work's intense resonance. Ku demonstrates a formidable insight into the human condition—one in which, ultimately, we are solitary beings, defined by disparate influences. Luckily, her remarkable talent can handle the task of communicating this experience, allowing everyone to take part.

By: [Ku Alibi.com](#)

Show runs through Jan. 3, 2010
Eight Modern
23, Delgado Street, Santa Fe
eighmodern.net
layku.com



My cat has made it all the way, and even to sleep beside us this

The Wife Aquatic

Fay Ku isn't dead, she just sleeps with the fishes

November 20, 2009, 12:00 am
By John Probst

Double entendre, Fay Ku's exhibition at High Modern, is a crowd-pleaser. Or maybe just a crowd-riper. Or maybe I'm a pervert. Whichever it is, I was left wanting more, both for the beauty of the art and, at only six drawings, the brevity of the show.

The unadorned figurative works nicely fulfill the trifecta of contemporary drawing: They are well-rendered, inimitable and sort of naughty. I found myself nodding my head at her line work, scratching my head at her motives and shaking my head at her lascivious subjects.

It is obvious that Ku can draw, but her craft never develops into showiness. On the contrary, her compositions might be described as restrained or inhibited, if not for all the sensuality. She renders the forms with thin, curving carbons, using just the faintest lines to denote a fold in their flesh. For the most part, the subjects' limbs and noses lack texture or detail, but Ku's subtle watercolor washes warm the bodies, providing a sense of weight.

The large sheets of paper remain mostly empty, leaving the figures floating in off-white voids independent of gravity or architecture. The relationship to Asian woodblock prints is unmistakable, with its economy of line and sparse compositions, but the provocative imagery is a far cry from some Katsushika Hokusai desk calendar. Ku's protagonists are all aerie, and the lack of suspension is starting to get soheim. It might be said that they lack perspective.

Art historical references aside, she was reminded of a less academic tradition: those kids who sit and doodle through all their non-art classes, defacing their desks and winding everybody out. Certainly Ku's graphic style would find approval among the comic-book crowd, as would the graphic content. Indeed, most of these drawings would land Ku in denouement.

After reading an interview with the artist, she seems to fit the bill. She is a self-described loner with a compulsion to make art. In a telling moment, she was asked what advice she had for up-and-coming artists. She replied, "Don't become an artist unless you have to," implying that her art helps her cope (with what? "I'm not sure, but it doesn't seem too happy in there).

Several of the works depict figures in sexually suggestive poses, often children, often with non-human animals. Though the figures are typically nude, the subject matter is never explicit. Erogenous zones are either turned away from the viewer or covered—and by covered—mean suckled by a fish.

Strangely, except for one little boy in the work "Fish Sticks," the figures derive little pleasure from their aquatic accompaniment. The twin drawings "Sea Bed" and "Nubile" depict the same adult female lying prone with an expression of utter indifference among schools of fish, as though the phalanx of fins swimming at her nethers is starting to get boring.

The show's title, *Double Entendre*, implies a tension between what is said and what is meant. Indeed, the innocuous titles do give way to jarring imagery, as though these ideas spring forth from Ku's brain at the mildest provocation. This is a fairly sophomoric approach to content—and there is nothing edisive more than when I feel someone is trying to be shocking—but the psychological weight of Ku's subjects feels genuine. The images recall moments of sexual excitement that preclude our understanding of sexuality and the way in which these events can develop into fully formed fetishes that defy our understanding of sexuality.

Alone on the west wall of the gallery is Ku's punch line, "Mermaid," a fish/woman hybrid born not of myth but of perversion. Is it justice, or is the artist being evil?

Double Entendre
Through Dec. 31
Eight Modern
232 Delgado St.
505-935-0232

Brooklyn artist exhibits haunting works at museum

By JENNIFER ABEL

Staff writer | Posted: Wednesday, May 6, 2009 12:00 am

NEW BRITAIN — Disturbingly beautiful, beautifully disturbing, just plain bizarre ... any of those phrases could describe the half-dozen graphite, ink and watercolor paintings of Fay Ku, whose self-titled exhibit is the latest showing in the New Britain Museum of American Art's NEW/NOW series, which focuses on upcoming artists.

The Taiwanese-born Ku now lives in Brooklyn, New York, but will be in New Britain today for the NEW/NOW opening reception from 5:30 to 7 p.m. However, the pictures themselves are already on display, and will remain up through the end of July. Ku chatted about her pictures and what they mean to her, though she was careful to specify that art means different things to different people, and viewers are welcome to draw their own interpretations from Ku's images.

"I think — this was not conscious," Ku said. "A lot of Asian art is symbolic."

The first picture you're likely to see upon walking into the NEW/NOW exhibit is titled "Burden Lightens Piecemeal." It shows a nude woman wrapped in black ropes, staggering under the weight of a corpse tied to her back. Upon closer inspection, you realize the ropes are actually the woman's own braided hair binding her to her gruesome burden. The corpse leaves a thin trail of blood behind it, which in turn attracts a flock of crows feasting upon the blood and the body.

"It means more than one thing," Ku said of the image. "It's like in dreams, when a person can be your boyfriend and your brother at the same time ... I got the idea after researching funerary practices in some parts of China. If you're a child or an unmarried woman ... you are not buried. They leave your body in a field and burn torches to attract crows."

Ku also recalled reading a fictionalized account of famed Siamese (conjoined) twins Chang and Eng.

"The book begins when Chang wakes up and his brother is dead. He realizes it's only a matter of time before he dies, too." And the picture might have a bit of pure psychology mixed in with its meaning: "She's carrying someone who looks like her. Symbolically, it's a part of her ... sometimes you have your own issues, your own baggage, and you can't let it go even though it harms you."

Kitty-corner to "Burden" hangs the 2008 image "See What You Do." It shows a woman wearing a dress made of peacock feathers; her dress is the only spot of color in a black-and-white forest. Closer to the picture, you realize that the trees are covered in eyeballs rather than branches and knots. The woman is covering her own eyes with one hand, while with the other she holds a knife and is poking out one of the tree eyes.

"There's a couple things going on," Ku observed. "I produced that when I was away from home and unhappy."



“This was [also] during the 2008 election. It’s not a political piece, but I thought about politics when I did it, all the things we’ve done the last eight years, how tragic it is we didn’t even see the harm we did. She has a dagger but she can’t see what she does with it ... The eyes in the trees also remind me of how we’re always under surveillance.”

The single most colorful piece in the gallery is “Keep Your Demons in Check.” It shows three small children in bright clothes, but each child’s black-and-white “shadow” has its face twisted in a nasty way. On second thought, glancing again at the colorful children, you realize their own faces aren’t particularly welcoming; they don’t look like nice kids at all. Ku agreed.

“They’ve never really been children, in a sense,” Ku said. In the Renaissance, there were pictures of Baby Jesus with a much older, adultlike facial expression; Ku said the children in her picture are in no way analogous to Jesus, but she liked the idea of children with adult faces and eyes.

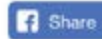
“My view of children isn’t idyllic,” she said. “They’re not as civilized, they’re less in control of their emotions, more fraught with fears.”

“NEW/NOW: Fay Ku” will be at the New Britain Museum of American Art, 56 Lexington St., through July 26. The opening reception is today from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Artist’s remarks with Fay Ku scheduled for 6 p.m. Admission to the reception and the exhibit is free with museum admission.

Jennifer Abel can be reached at jabel@ctcentral.com or by calling (860) 225-4601, ext. 306.

CRITICISM ▣ EXHIBITIONS

Sunday, March 30th, 2008



Fay Ku

by Jonathan Goodman

Kips Gallery
531 West 25th Street
New York City
212 242 4215

March 6 to April 5



Fay Ku, Feyzor 2007, graphite, watercolor, ink on paper, 88 X 150 inches. Courtesy The Artist.



When Fay Ku was a child, her parents used to tell her fairy tales with horrible rather than happy endings—it was their way of introducing their daughter to the dangers of the world. Ku, who moved to America from Taiwan at the age of three to be with her parents (her grandmother had raised her after birth), responded sensitively to the troubled narratives her parents entertained her with: she became an artist whose work incorporates children and adolescents in situations that emphasize the sheer strangeness of childhood. Not unlike the fantastic, whimsical artist Henry Darger, Ku refers to a mindset populated by children who undermine confidence in the world as it is. She prefers to present disturbing tableaux, in which young girls pull each other's hair or regurgitate snakes, so that the scenes become meditations on transgressions that make no sense, that seem to come out of nowhere.

Ku is invested in secrets, the kind of intimacy that occurs when something private is told privately. It is an intensely female world, whose idiosyncratic habits do not lack for aggression. The viewer hopes for a key to the eccentricities of the imagery, but none is offered—we must make sense of the uncanny aggression Ku's subjects submit to. While not all the girls are engaging in destructive activities, even the supposedly benign drawings emphasize exotic situations, with the girls' bodies caricatured in poses that are humanly impossible to carry off. For example, in *Secret* (2007) two attractive young women are head to head, transmitting secrets—the figure on the right cups her hand to her ear in order to hear better. Both figures are being violated by sexless personages—we do not see their faces—who wear striped clothing and seem to peer at the subjects' genitals. Regularly, Ku invites us into a world where nothing seems right.

Sometimes the images deliberately seek provocation—in the erotic sense, where the young women are both vulnerable and sexually available. In *Nightcrawlers* (2007) a naked post-adolescent girl, lying on a bed, is covered with large worms; they are attracted to her breast (which she also covers with her hand) and her sex, hiding the pubis. A worm is found at her lips and in her hair, and the figure's expression is troubled, as if she were enduring her condition for the sake of someone else. The masochism becomes even more apparent in *Thorny* (2007), in which a nude young woman remarkably like Ku herself is enveloped in thorns, which wrap her hands, enter her mouth, and curl under to her genitals. These two images both suggest psychological as well as physical pain, yet we don't know why the artist has portrayed her subjects as she does; the enigma of their existence turns on the experience of suffering, but the vivid conundrums of Ku's drawings show only the effect and not the cause.

One of the more affecting drawings pictures a young girl with a short haircut, in a print blouse and shorts, walking off toward the left. Titled *Didn't Feel a Thing* (2005), the subject has left five bloody footprints; her right foot is stepped in blood. The young girl's profile reveals a somber demeanor, while the title of the work only emphasizes her predicament. Again, pain is key to the painting. In general, Ku's art is excruciating to the point where it doesn't make sense, resulting in a surrealism whose physical aches stand in for another kind of suffering. Although Ku describes girls and young women in raw circumstances, the hurt seems to be self-induced. This poses a seemingly intractable puzzle: Why should they do this to themselves? The answer to the mystery isn't all that clear, but what results is an extraordinary range of scenarios whose close familiarity border on frankness. We may not know the secrets, but nonetheless we are taken in by them; our bemusement results from the girls' unsolvable quandaries.