

3.3.2011: RYAN MCGINNESS NEW BLACKLIGHT WOMEN

March, 2011

Artist Ryan McGinness is back with his second installment of Women: The Blacklight Paintings. The new series follows his success of the premiere of the project during Art Basel this past December, where he took over Miami's strip club Madonna.

Ryan's mission is simple: to reinterpret the exquisite female form. To use his own words, his passion is derived from the "desire to embrace and capture the purely aesthetic experience of graceful curves and sensual forms".



The event-based exhibition this year is taking place inside The Standard, New York concurrent with Armory Week. Expect a transformation of several spaces in The Standard extending into The Shop (exclusive print and posters available there and here) as well as Le Bain (and just like the Miami event, painted dancers will take center stage during a one-night event creating a dynamic interaction between the canvases and their environment).

Just before the visual madness was introduced, Ryan shared some exclusive thoughts with The Standard about his early inspirations that birthed the series...



(Ryan's Installation at Le Bain)

The Standard: You've been working with iconic universal signals for most of your career. Can you remember the first moment it dawned on you that you wanted to "sexify" them? Can you remember how the process unfolded?

Ryan McGinness: Yes. There are a few moments that lead me to this new series. The first was attending Will Cotton's figure drawing salons. Will hosts a model and artist friends in his studio every now and then. Over the past few years I have been able to attend only 2 or 3 of his salons. While I enjoy the exercise of figure drawing, I never knew what to do with the sketches. So, the pleasure of drawing the figure was already there for me, but I didn't have anywhere to go with it. In 2009, I completed a series of 200 drawings based on works in the collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.



(Otto Mueller's *Nude in Landscape*, and future renderings by Ryan McGinness)

Within this series are drawings based on figures in artworks. I was most pleased with a figure I drew based on Otto Mueller's *Nude in Landscape*. The final drawing excited me, but because it was a drawing of a painting, I didn't feel like the result could live on its own outside the conceptual framework of the VMFA project (that is, creating drawings of artworks, or symbols of symbols).



“Party 16: Drawing Salon hosted by Will Cotton of Ryan McGinness’ 50 Parties Project”

In 2010 Will hosted a drawing salon as part of my 50 Parties project [this was party #16]. Drawing at this party reignited my interest in figure drawing. As a result, I used figure drawings based on life sketches for the invitation for the Naked Party (Party # 49). From there, I started this new series.



Party 49: Party Naked of Ryan McGinness’ 50 Parties Project

Would you say this new round of work has sharpened your understanding of the subject matter? If so, describe the mental journey from the last collection of Women: The Blacklight Paintings to this one?

The first few Women: The Blacklight Paintings were presented by Country Club at Club Madonna in Miami last December. There hasn't been much time between then and now for any sharpening. Sorry, my mental journey is a slow one.

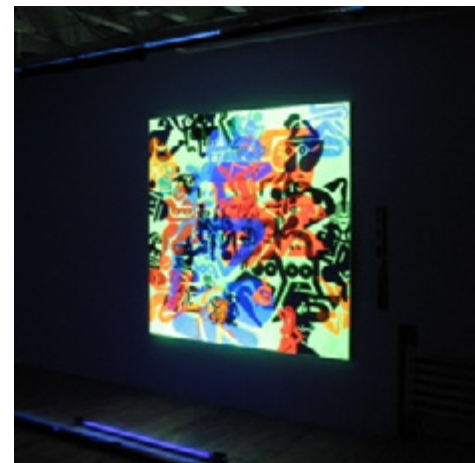
Why the color palette CMYK? Is it a parallel to the primal essence of graphic language in general?

CMYK are the four ink colors used to create most full-color image reproductions in offset printing. I will often employ the use of these colors at 100% coverage for each ink in print projects in order to fully exploit color purity and promote process and material integrity. Any other color printed with a CMYK process (besides cyan, magenta, yellow, or black) is a simulation composed of dot screen patterns from a combination of those inks.

However, these black light paintings are built with fluorescent paints. My use of fluorescent paints under the black light color spectrum is a strategy to force a singular time/space experience with the work. That is to say, the work must be experienced in person, and cannot be fully appreciated through reproductions via jpegs or printed catalog pages.



Women Painting 3, 2010 studio view



Studio view under blacklight

Black light emits only a frequency in the invisible range of 350-370 nm. The fluorescent paints used in the paintings absorb this ultraviolet light and then re-emit it almost instantaneously. Some energy gets lost in the process, so the emitted light has a longer wavelength than the absorbed radiation, which makes this light visible and causes the paint to appear to glow. This is possible because of the presence of the fluorophore molecule in the paint. These fluorescent molecules can also be found in some Legos, laundry detergent, jellyfish, some minerals, and urine.

Off the top of your head, what qualities do you think are sexiest in a woman? What aspects of the personality or physical traits make your heart and mind skip a beat?

Off the top of my head, I am attracted to intelligence. Personality: calm and considered. Physical Traits: shapes, not lines.

Who exactly is this cool collective Country Club, and how did you link with them to work on this project?

Country Club operates exhibition spaces in Los Angeles and Cincinnati and produced many off-site projects in other markets. I met Christian Strike when he owned Strength Magazine. Strength was a skateboard culture magazine. After Strength, Christian curated with Aaron Rose the Beautiful Losers traveling exhibition I was in. He then started Country Club and organized an exhibition of some of my black-light paintings in 2008 at the Cincinnati Art Museum. They have taken on the presentation of the new Women paintings in Miami, New York, and Los Angeles.



(Ryan McGinness Designed Cover for the now defunct Strength Magazine)

This collection will be featured inside the Standard Hotel during this art-inspired week of Armory Show. Which areas of the hotel will the installation exist in, how many pieces will be featured this time, and can anyone come see the work?

There are four blacklight paintings in Le Bain at the top of the Standard here in New York. Each painting is 72 x 72 inches. They are hung under blacklights on top of the windows, and there is a small window of opportunity to see them. They come down on Saturday, March 5th.

Tell us about your 3rd multi-venue event in Los Angeles this May 2011. What can we expect to behold in the LA showing?

The third and final event for the Women: The Blacklight Paintings will take place in Los Angeles this Spring. This event will be a part of series of exhibitions and projects in Los Angeles in May and June at Michael Kohn Gallery, Prism, Country Club, Subliminal Projects, Giant Robot, and The Standard hotel.