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ARTnews

CRITIC'S PICK

HOPE GANGLOFF



Hope Gangloff's paintings, such as *as to be titled*, 2010, feel like snapshots, but are often based on several drawings.

A raven-haired beauty, topless and tapping at her cell phone; a pale, languid man sprawled beside a dog; paper cups, umbrellas, Chinese-takeout containers, and the detritus of urban life; women with strong features and few inhibitions; men with long hair, five o'clock shadows, nicotine addictions, and well-placed tattoos.

Hope Gangloff's paintings and drawings borrow from two very different milieus. One is grungy, hip, and undeniably downtown. The other is home to fair-skinned beauties who appeared in the work of early-20th-century avant-garde artists Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele. And somehow, with this artist-illustrator at the helm, it all seems to fit.

Gangloff, 35, studied painting at Cooper Union in New York and spent years thereafter working for foundries in Montana and Brooklyn. Fabricating works for others was not her profession of choice, but in the late '90s and early '00s, it was the only art job she could get—and keep. Service-oriented gigs never really worked for her. "I've been fired from every waitressing job I've ever had," she says. "I relate to people well when I'm joking around with them and when I'm painting them—that's really the way that I relate to other human beings."

So the pale beauties in Gangloff's canvases are, for the most part, members of her inner circle. Fellow artists, their significant others, and miscellaneous neighbors, cohorts, colleagues, and friends are paired with items from Gangloff's "Interesting Things to Paint" collection, an ever-growing stash of shoes, beer bottles with fun logos, Polish tabloids, and other odds and ends kept in her Brooklyn studio. Her materials, for a long time, were also foraged: scraps of craft paper, cans of unwanted paint, and panels she swiped from her husband, painter Benjamin Degen. It was these stolen surfaces, incidentally, that helped Gangloff determine the default size of her current paintings, a nearly monumental 54 by 81 inches.

New York dealer Susan Inglett took notice of Gangloff's work in a 2005 group show, and the two have been working together ever since. Gangloff's fall 2009 exhibition at the gallery nearly sold out, with drawings and paintings priced between \$2,000 and \$25,000.

Gangloff has nabbed a solo show at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut, opening in late January, and will be back at Susan Inglett Gallery for another show in the spring. She's taking a brief hiatus from exhibiting this year, because it is her husband's turn. "We definitely can't handle our schedules colliding," she says. She's happy to be "fancy free" and tackle some of the odder "Interesting Things to Paint" items. "I have some headresses I haven't gotten around to," she says.

—Rachel Wolff



Rachel Wolff is a New York-based critic, writer, and editor.

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