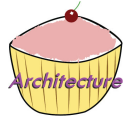




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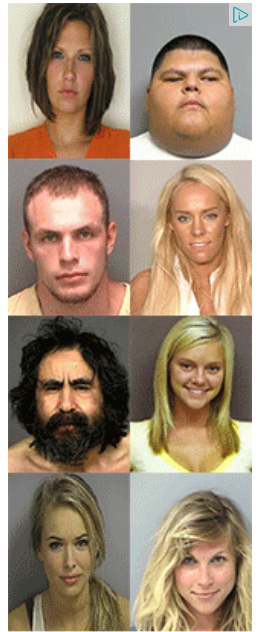
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Jessica Borusky, from *Civilian Stories*.





Rachel Gregors, *Girl Sitting on Bed with a Cat*.

Young Women in Full, Across the Universe; Two Artists in Counterpoint



Rachel Gregors, *Self Portrait No 20*

Front/Space Studio
 217 W. 18th Street
 913-709-6530
 Kansas City
Project: Process
 March 7-March 24, 2014

Subterranean Gallery
 4124 Warwick, Apartment B
 Kansas City
Barred Meadows
 March 7-April 15, 2014

By **BLAIR SCHULMAN**

Two artists exhibiting across the city from one another are making a smart duet of ideas. Without having any relationship to the other, Rachel Gregors at Sub Gallery in midtown Kansas City and Jessica Borusky at Front/Space in the Crossroads are both intriguing in that their work neither leads nor follows the other. Each artists work is independent and strong in ways that are equally stimulating.

Gregors' oil paintings, both large and small, have a late 1960's look and feel similar to the 1999 film, *Girl, Interrupted* but without the crazy. There is an air of languidness amid floral backdrops (*Mary with Floral Sheet* is one example) and crocheted afghans that ignite reminiscences of soft Sunday afternoons. For *Girl Sitting on a Bed with Cat*, a patch of a garishly colored bedspread, a feline curled in a ball, tonal sounds muted, speaks nicely to these

warm and easy feelings.

Gregors' pieces purr gently, stirring up visions of something soft and clean. *Study After Rachel Ruysch*, a simple bouquet of flowers comes as a gift.

The piece itself is very small, forcing you closer; you're almost compelled to wonder if they bear scent. *Study After Boucher* is very similarly constructed, too, you want touch the petals and feel their velvet.

That is the general feeling of much of these painting; wondering about the smells and touches of the ideas left behind. This is very simple, classical portraiture, but their styles are very strongly executed.

If Gregors' work portrays melancholy and comeliness, then Borusky trumpets the language of conviction and declarations. The two separate exhibitions play nicely off the other without ever intending to do so.

As part of their ongoing *Civilian Stories* publishing project at Front/Space, March's artist is Jessica Borusky presenting "Project: Process!", a two-channel video installation exploring language used in urban development alongside personification via "performance-for-video." Borusky's straightforward head-and-shoulder video displays march stridently with bureaucracy, knocking over synonyms and antonyms in steel-toed boots!

Borusky's 10-minute and 30-minute looped videos are an assault of repetitive language that appears rooted in the strict caste system of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932). Says Borusky,

"The video that is projected, the words in the first ten minutes are opportunity, development, livability. The next ten minutes are the "way" those words get implemented: process, policy, service. Then the last ten minutes is the word community."

Stand there long enough and these words are eventually drummed into the viewer. Pictorially, Borusky is portrayed differently in each video. A small screen fronting the alley shows her with hair down; a small piece of jewelry and a glimpse of tattoo are noticeable.

Even though one cannot really hear what is being said, the conviction in her motions are evident and you begin to read her lips, so that you begin to say the words on your own, and eventually believe them. Inside the gallery, a much larger screen is projected showing her with hair neatly coiffed, wearing a collared shirt over a blazer, ready for a corporate interview.

There is a bit of mind conditioning going on with both videos, and it is unclear who are Alpha/Beta and who are Gamma/Delta/Epsilon. Or maybe they both are and one is never free of any caste. The psychological manipulation and conditioning of the videos are so compelling that throughout the evening the word community kept running through my head. Game. Set. Match, I suppose.

I believe Borusky's use of repetitive speech renders the ideas she imparts as sexless. Idioms and terminology for the sake of keeping the bureaucracy alive is a dominant factor here. If ideas of gender are to be considered here, then corporate culture as it exists in our society should be accused of taking simple language and overcomplicating it to the point of neutering its users. Left as automatons, reciting words incessantly without really giving thought to the ideas and actions they impart.

Both artists are equally persuasive in their views as Gregors takes an approach that exhibits softness and calm that can lead one into a sort of gentle capitulation. Borusky, on the other hand, inveighs with so much repetition as to just have observers give in rather than try and stave it off. If possible, these exhibitions ought to be viewed concurrently to appreciate both sides.



Rachel Gregors, Self Portrait No 15

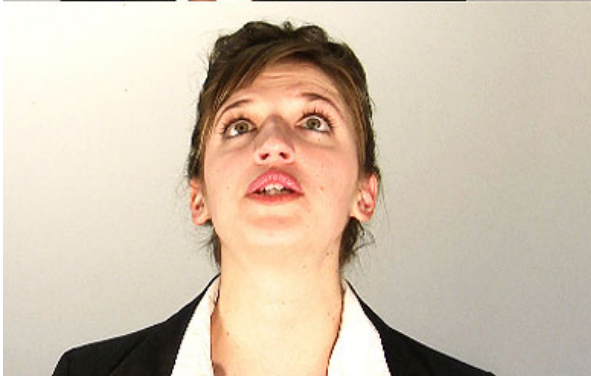




Rachel Gregors, *Mary with Floral Sheet*.



Rachel Gregors, *Self Portrait No 21*



Jessica Borusky, from *Civilian Stories*.



Rachel Gregors, Study After Rachel Ruysch.