

reviews: new_york

Dusty Boynton

Denise Bibro Fine Art

Dusty Boynton's art isn't as easy and casual as it appears. Her characters—human, animal, and hybrid—are childlike and scrawled, often staring straight out from the picture surface. To invest these figures, as Boynton does, with individual personalities and emotional weight, as well as with the ability to relate psychologically to one another, is a real artistic feat. This is why the influences and associations in her work are of the highest order. There's a hint of a de Kooning woman's leer in one painting, the suggestion of a Dubuffet scribbled mouth in another, and evocations of Ken Kiff's fantasy world and Paula Rego's claustrophobic anxieties elsewhere. But Boynton's creations are far more than the sum of these influences.

Whether she is conjuring a multifarious gathering of characters from the sparest of means—witness the scrawls and smudges of greenish, tarry black that she uses in *Crowd* (2008)—or focusing on a single individual, Boynton's ability to breathe life into her images is often quite unsettling. In her coloristically complex *Girl with Vase* (2008) the girl's hair is



Dusty Boynton, *Crowd*, 2008, oil on linen, 66" x 72".
Denise Bibro Fine Art.

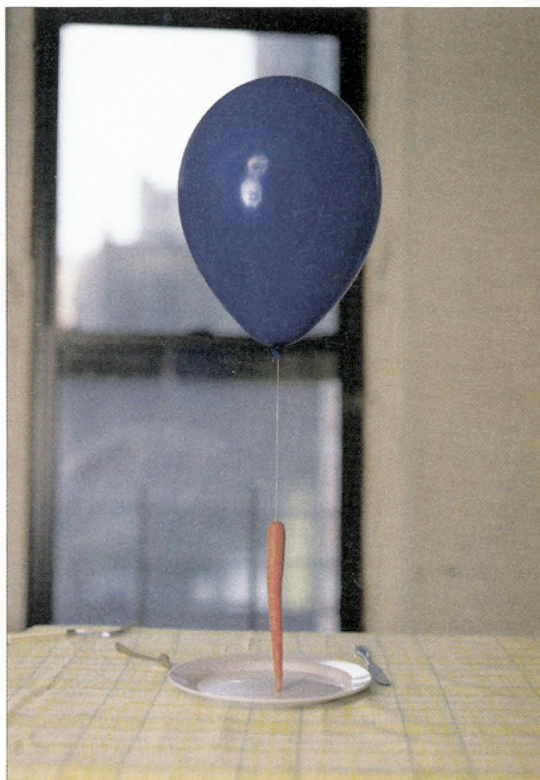
flaming red, her dress shifts from a flurry of buttery yellows through marshmallow pinks—but the composition itself is the simplest thing. As the title says, it's a girl standing by a vase of flowers. The face, brushily overworked and scarred with a wide downturned mouth and misshapen eyes that look off to one side, registers a distress as deep as what you'd find in a contemporary news photograph. Her life is so soured, it would seem, that the plants in her vase have mutated and discolored in response. This makes for an unforgettable picture.

—Robert Ayers

Carlo Ferraris

Florence Lynch

With deadpan humor, intellectual acuity, and a deep reservoir of absurdity, Carlo Ferraris continues his investigations into the almost surreal. These works were divided into two shows. The main one, an installation titled "I bought this *&%\$#@ house because of this table!" consisted of a video, photographs, and an audio installation with headphones dangling from the center of the room, relating the following Rube Goldbergian story: a woman tells how she didn't feel well and went to buy clothes to keep her warm but discovered they were wrinkled, so she decided to buy an iron but was told she'd need a table for the iron, and once she'd bought the table she needed a house to put it in and found one but it was in New Jersey, so she



Carlo Ferraris, *(40° 44' 50.77" N 73° 59' 30.43" W)*, 2008, RC print, 57" x 44". Florence Lynch.

moved it brick by brick into New York City, where the table was waiting.

Visually, it was really the tale of the table with the video and the stills showing who and what can be put on it and under it. Animating the table are plates and silverware standing on end, a carrot on its tip held up by a balloon, and cups and saucers teetering on the edges. In the video as well as the stills, objects are suspended from almost imperceptible strings, rendering visible the near-surreal. Ferraris's work sits at the juncture between absurdity and magic.

The other show, "All the artwork I would have made if Horen Higgins was my father," consisted mainly of objects having to do with measurements and tools. There was a floor scale set at about 60 pounds, a voice counting up to the quadrillions, and water dripping into a glass from a hole in a can, as well as an electric hand drill spinning into the floor and a photograph of an electric shotgun resting on a countertop beside a coffee-maker. A caption warns that the gun is safe for domestic use only. The genius of Ferraris's work is that it all takes place within the realm of possibility.

—Barbara A. MacAdam