



Cecelia Phillips
Mystery Hatch



Exploded Shed, 2008
oil on paper, 45 x 53.5 in.



Cover:
detail, *Mystery Hatch*, 2007
oil on paper, 42 x 48 in.

Bee Jar, 2008
oil on paper, 45 x 50 in.



Blimps with Bird Envy, 2007
oil on paper, 42 x 50 in.

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Mystery Hatch

Jun 5–Jul 31, 2009

William Busta Gallery
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Windows

A little while ago I gave an artist's talk to some ladies (highly enjoyable ladies, one of which told me a tale of a pet spider monkey named Rufus) and found myself describing these works as "windows." This has a special reference for me: daydreams being the thing of which I am mostly made, since I was little I've always had to—with terror and exhilaration—lift the curtain on the window, anticipating hideous and glorious events happening on the other side. I've been seduced by transcendent realities since the very beginning—anywhere from *Mary Poppins* (that cartoon sequence where they jump into the chalk painting sent my young mind into paroxysms of delight); Pan's Labyrinth; *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*; the MTV animated series *The Maxx*; scores of books such as *The Neverending Story*, *Dr Doolittle*, *Guns, Germs and Steel*; *Danny, Champion of the World*, *Life of Pi*, *Where the Sidewalk Ends...* I find it appropriate to conclude with *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (although I could name many, many more) because I am precisely interested in this concept—if you have seen the book before, it illustrates on its cover a young gender-less creature peering over the crescent of sidewalk that comprises the end of the world as we know it—the end of the world and the beginning of our imagination.

Like the bystander at the sidewalk's edge, I'm looking over to a remembered place that doesn't exist, a window to a world in which I belong but don't live. This can take all shapes and forms, but generally manifests as a voyeuristic take on a relationship between creatures, animal and human, depicting a secret moment frozen in time. I should mention that I am thinking of these as windows because of the immediacy of the view my work allows, being flat to the wall as paper paintings. Paper for me harkens to several references that become immediately relevant to my work: one, that they are directly linked to the medium of illustration, for which without I would not have become an artist; and two, their flatness begins to act as "panes," a definitive barrier between the viewer and what is viewed, but one that can be navigated easily and with the sensuous pleasure of one who has stumbled upon something secret while still remaining safely anonymous.



I don't mean to hint though, that one would mistake one of my paintings for an alternate reality on the other side of the wall. They are only semi-realistic or photographic, and they are only photographic in the sense that they are highly contrasted and focus on a pristine or artificial light and deep, velvety blacks. They are highly illustrative, with thick, almost etched line drawings providing the skeleton to the work and deep saturated colors providing the environments. These photographic and illustrational references are also combined with the soft, supple touch and light of history painting such as the Rococo, 19th-century Romanticism and personal heroes such as Courbet, Caravaggio, Landseer, Vermeer (again, on and on and on) suggesting a contextual confusion that becomes a collage, a moving narrative with many sources of which none are quite recognizable yet seem strangely familiar and intimate.

Cecelia Phillips

Above:
Mystery Hatch, 2007
oil on paper, 42 x 48 in.

Cecelia Phillips

Born 1982, Rochester, NY. Currently resides in Austin, TX.

ceceliaphillips.com

Education

- 2004 (non certificate) Central St. Martin's School of Art, London, UK
- 2005 BFA, Painting, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH
- 2009 MFA, Painting, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX

Solo Exhibitions

- 2008 *Domestic/Decay*, SOFA Gallery, Austin, TX
- 2007 *Daydreams Being the Thing of Which I'm Mostly Made*, William Busta Gallery, Cleveland, OH
- 2006 *Cecelia Phillips: Recent Works of Escape*, Miller-Weitzel Gallery, Cleveland, OH

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2009 (upcoming) *Reality Show*, Texas Women's University, Dallas, TX
- 2009 *Terrain*, (MFA Thesis show 2009) Creative Research Lab, Austin, TX
- 2009 *22nd Annual Women's Works*, Old Courthouse Gallery, Woodstock, IL
- 2008 *Summer Salon*, Visual Arts Center, Austin, TX
- 2008 *Reality Show*, Women & Their Work Gallery, Austin, TX
- 2008 *If I Sent You A Message In A Paper Airplane, It Would Look Like This*, Directory Gallery, Austin, TX
- 2007 *Interchange*, Creative Research Lab, Austin, TX
- 2007 *Existence is Elsewhere*, Else Madsen Gallery, Austin, TX
- 2006 *Seven*, Convivium 33 Gallery, Cleveland, OH
- 2005 *NEO+ONE*, Murray Hill Galleries, Cleveland, OH
- 2005 *Bachelor of Fine Arts Exhibition*, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland OH
- 2004 *Capturing Cleveland: Pages from a City Sketchbook*, SPACES Gallery, Cleveland, OH

Selected Honors and Awards

- 2008 Michael Frary Endowed Scholarship in Painting; Kelly Fearing Endowed Scholarship in Art Education and Studio Art; Marshall F. Wells Scholarship and Fellowship Endowment in the College of Fine Arts; The Georgia B. Lucas Foundation Fund Scholarship; The University of Texas at Austin
- 2007 Michael Frary Endowed Scholarship in Painting; Ellen Clayton Garwood Scholarship; College of Fine Arts Student Excellence Scholarship; The University of Texas at Austin
- 2006 Entering Graduate Fellowship, The University of Texas at Austin
- 2005 Finalist, Wendy L. Moore Emerging Artists Series, Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Cleveland, OH
- 2004 Liza Noble Scholarship for Excellence in Painting, Cleveland Institute of Art; British American Chamber of Commerce Traveling Scholarship, British American Chamber of Commerce
- 2003 John Paul Wrobbel Painting Prize, Cleveland Institute of Art

Publications

- 2007 *New American Paintings* Issue Number 79 (Western Edition).
- 2006 *Cleveland Sketchbook*, Indigo Custom Publishing, Macon, GA

Residencies

- 2008 Vermont Studio Center, full fellowship resident for the month of August

Professional Experience

- 2009 Visiting Artist, Youth Arts Program, Arthouse at the Jones Center, Austin, TX
- 2006 Visiting Artist, Kent State University Painting Program, Kent, OH