

The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper

Work'n It
January 10 - February 14, 2008

Joyce Lau



Commentary by Julie Oakes

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Artist Catalog, Joyce Lau
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Commentary by Julie Oakes
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Toronto Canada

Joyce Lau

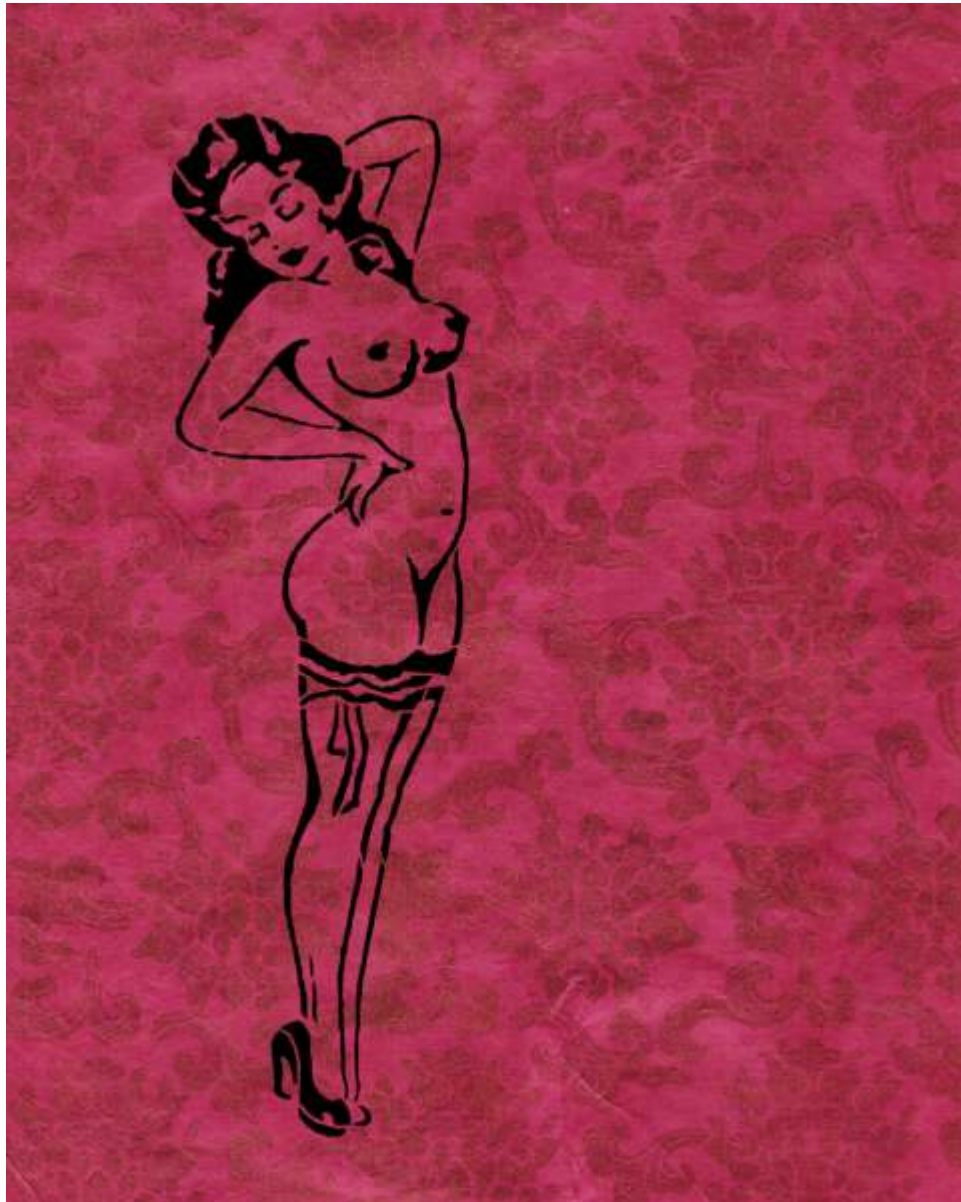
Work'n It

The image almost blurs into pattern as the cut-out breaks up the ground and mollifies the message. Like a succinct one-liner, a headline or satirical quip, the message is seated within the context of repetition and yet it triggers a responsive recognition and an ensuing abrasion. *Frida*, for instance, consists of a cut-out of the well known face with her heavy meeting eyebrows and the flora of Mexico surrounding her. The fabric out of which the cut has been made is wrapping paper for a baby present, replete with rattles and pastels. Frida Kahlo was doomed to childlessness as the result of a near fatal accident, horrible in aspect as she was pinioned to a metal fence post when thrown from a bus. The artist not only then faced a life of physical suffering but also had to deal with the emotional hardship of not being able to bare a child. The Joyce Lau version is as straight to the point as a blade cutting paper.

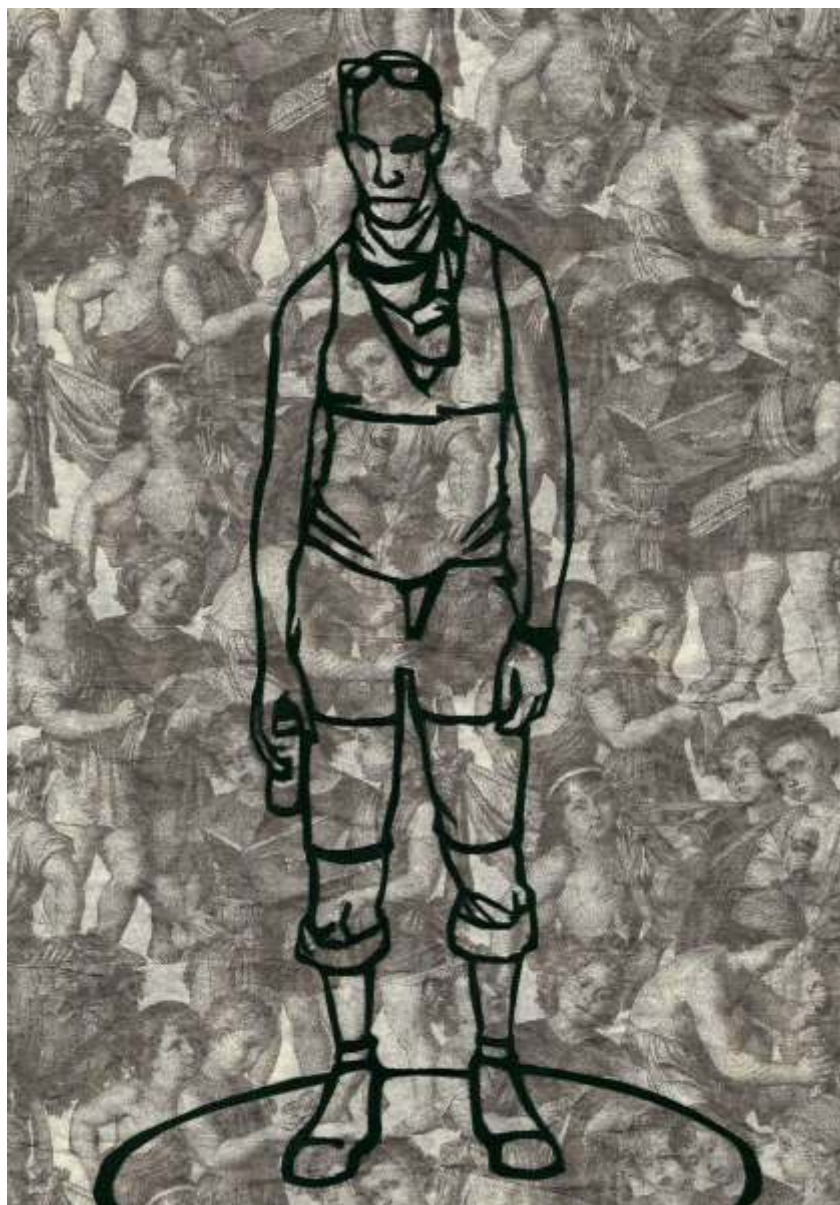
The use of black outline is either achieved by slicing into the ground and revealing a black back drop or by overlaying the filaments of a line silhouette of the subject against the pattern chosen for the contextual ground. In *Toxic Boy* a street punk male in cut off pants and holding a can of paint slouches before an overall repetition of grey cupids and is Lau's interpretation of a character from Tim Burton's book "The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy and Other Stories". The difference between the historical angelical babies and the boy is reinforced by the rubbery, spidery line made in depicting the figure.

Lau relates to history through eyes made aware of race, religion and cultural diversity. *Napalm* shows the photograph of victims fleeing from napalm in South Viet Nam. She juxtaposes the photographic image with a pattern taken from Katsushika Hokusai's famous wood block. The eighteenth century Japanese artist was himself a rebel - a cocky and quarrelsome Bohemian. That his work should have been translated into a banal and kitsch wrapping for presents furthers the irony as Joyce Lau's choice of materials are pertinent to her understanding of tragic events in Eastern history. Lau, of Chinese descent, lends new connections to the relationships between tradition and the stimulus of progressive modernity. The dark lines of the stencilled image, much like the work of Kara Walker, illustrates that it is too easy to superficially cast the subject. Through her research into the many possibilities of associations, Lau brings forth a new version of political positioning.

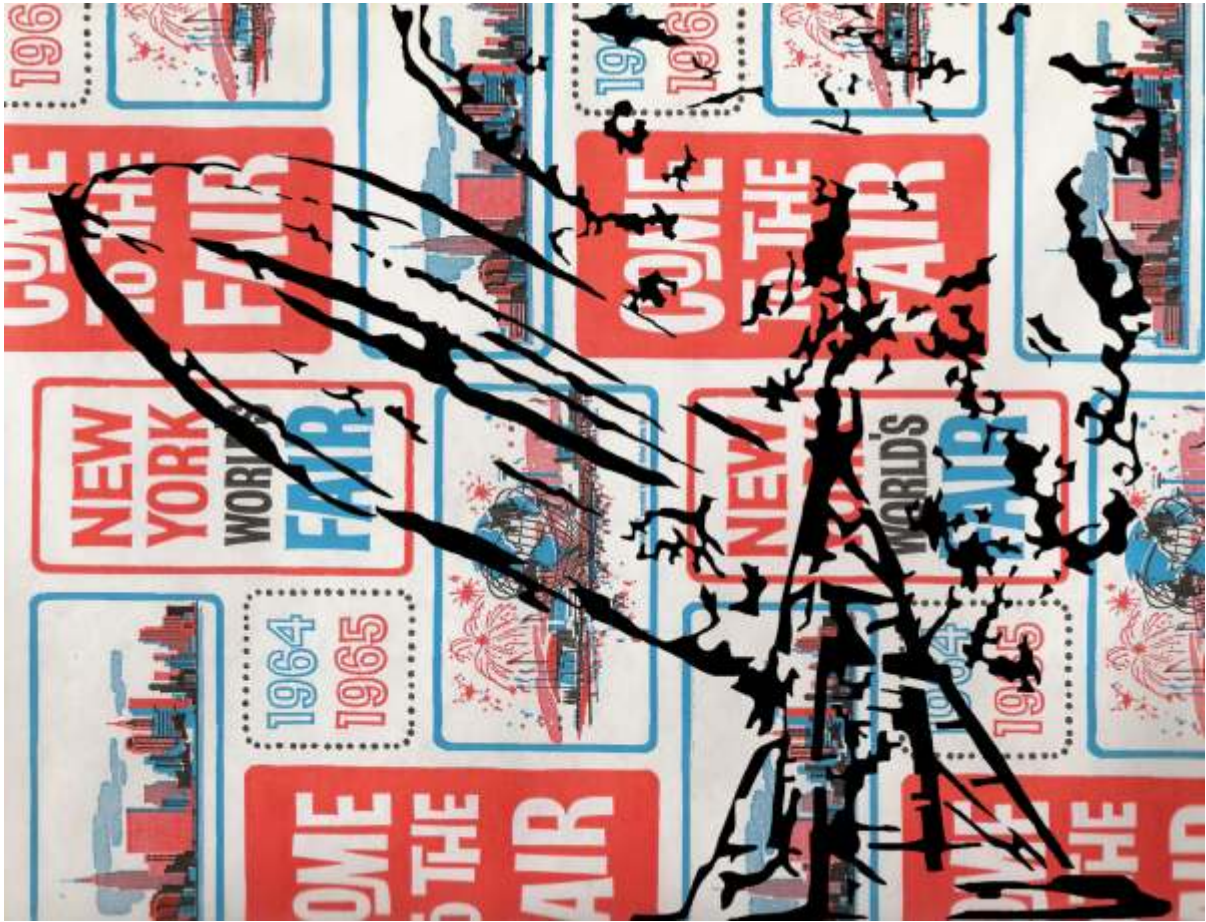
Julie Oakes



Garter Girl 2006
cut-out on Nepalese paper (8x10 inches)



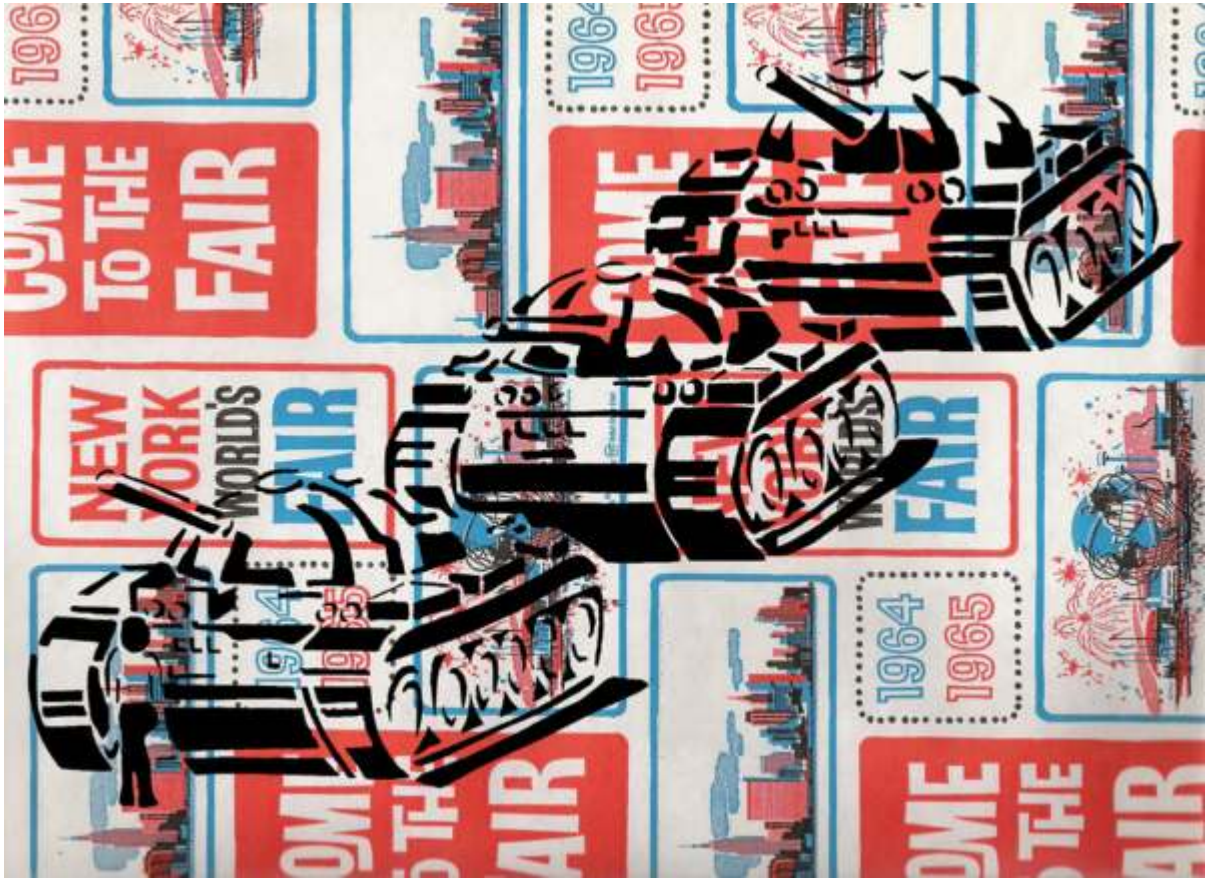
Toxic Boy - 2003
cut-out on cardstock, spray paint, and tissue paper (7x9 inches)



World's Fair #1 - 2005
cut-out on vintage wrapping paper (16x13 inches)



World's Fair #2 2005
cut-out on vintage wrapping paper (24x13 inches)



World's Fair #3 - 2006
cut-out on vintage paper (20x13 inches)



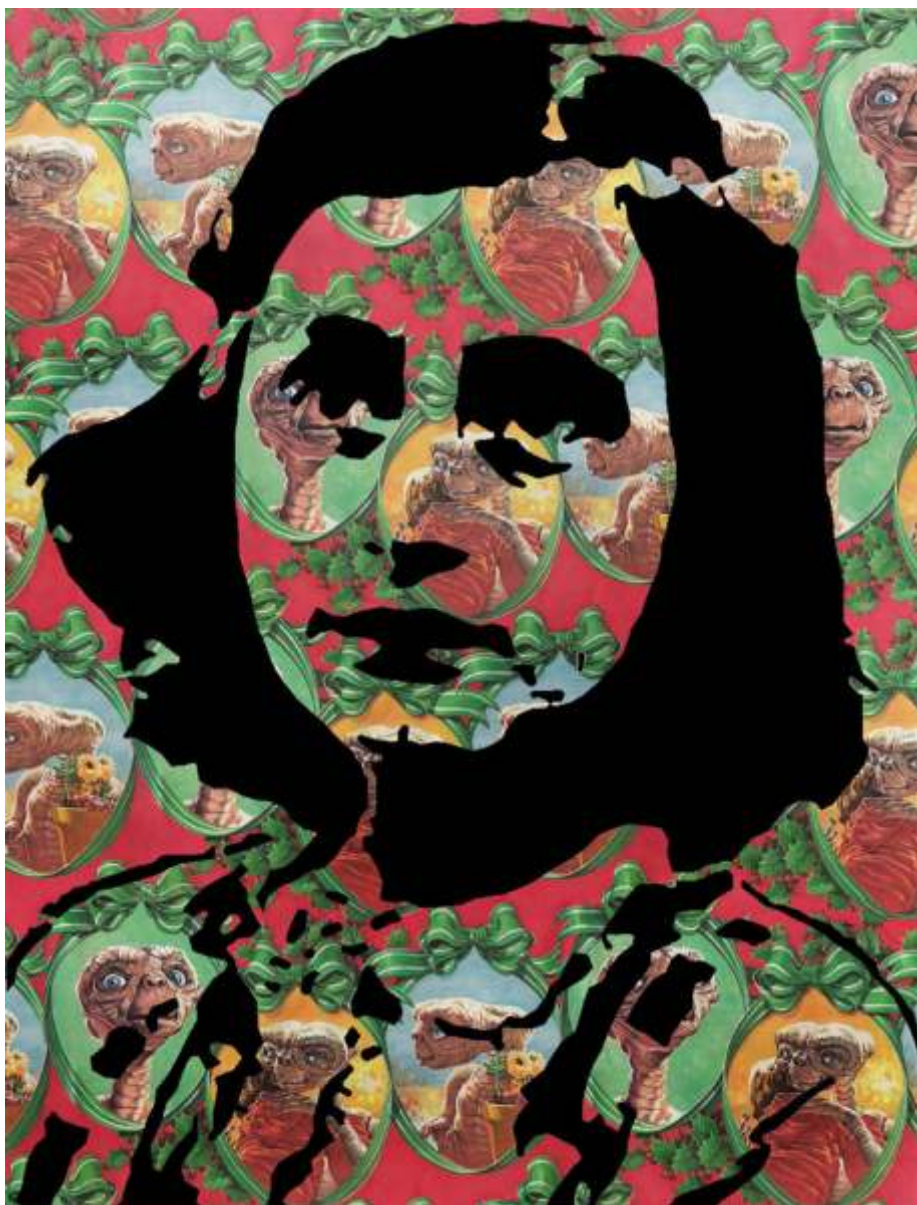
Napalm 2005
cut-out on Japanese paper (24x20 inches)



Frida, - 2005
cut-out on wrapping paper (15x20 inches)



Aileen -2005
cut-out on plastic-coated paper (16x20 inches)



Anne 2005
cut-out on vintage wrapping paper (22x30 inches)



Goodbye 2007
cut-out on three layers of canson paper (20x16 inches)

Joyce Lau

EDUCATION

2004 B.F.A. Photographic Studies, Ryerson University

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2008 Group show, Le Gallery (upcoming in February)
Work'n It, Headbones Gallery
- 2007 *The Very GOOD show*, IndexG Gallery
Graffiti Research Lab's Laser Tag, presented by MOCCA
for Nuit Blanche
Square Foot 2007, AWOL Gallery
Fleeting Face, A Space Gallery
Toronto Timeraiser 2007, The Berkeley Church
Love Transcending Boundaries, 5th Annual Juried Exhibition, presented
by Lonsdale Gallery, Harbourfront Centre
- 2006 *Very Merry Non-Xmaz Show*, Tranzac
Blood, Sweat & Tears, SPIN gallery
Foolsluck, Gladstone Ballroom
- 2005 *New Cut-outs*, SAN (solo exhibition)
- 2004 *Hollywood Beauty Secrets*, Ryerson Gallery (solo exhibition)
Hollywood Beauty Secrets, Cocktail Molotov (sculptural installation)
Canadian Content, Case Studies, Harbourfront Centre
- 2003 *Spiritual Shopping Mall*, Ryerson University
Third Year Show, Ryerson Gallery
- 2002 *Eccentricity*, L-Caf , New York
Thursdays, Flux Factory, New York
- 2001 *Maximum Exposure*, Ryerson University
- 2000 *Great Fakes*, Gallery 44 (Contact event)
- 1999 *Fantasy Fashion Show*, Gallery 1313

PUBLICATIONS

- 2006 "Top 500 Artists Websites", *NY Arts Magazine*
- 2003 "Know Your Rights", *Function*
"E avanti lui tremava tutta Roma", *Portfolio V*
- 2001 "Zygor's Last Dance" (digitally animated promotional), *Space Network*
- 1997 "Asians in the Media", *Toronto Star*

PRESS

- 2007 "Ethnicity's Fleeting Face", *NOW* magazine (July 12-18, p81)
- 2006 Tips & Picks, www.nyartsmagazine.com
Artist's Corner, www.stompinggrapes.ca
- 2004 "Beauty and the beast a powerful calling card", *Toronto Star* (Sept.2, G7)
"Hollywood Beauty Secrets Revealed", *The Eyeopener* (Sept.15, p15)

ARTS ORGANIZATION EXPERIENCE

- June 07 Present Gallery Assistant, Ydessa Hendeles Art Foundation
- Sept. 03 June 04 Exhibition Coordinator, Ryerson Gallery
- Jan. 03 June 03 Co-curator, *Defining Boundaries*, Ryerson Gallery
- Dec 01 May 02 Coordination Assistant, Flux Factory (Non-profit Arts Organization), New York
- Nov. 01 June 02 Studio Assistant, Doug and Mike Starn Studio, New York

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