



GREY ART GALLERY & Study Center/NYU Art Collection



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The work of Lily van der Stokker conjures up more questions than it answers, her lambent, cursive forms recalling the decor and dreams of childhood now forgotten or discarded. Relying upon the chock-a-block gray matter of our emotional psyche to jolt us backwards, her day-glo dream-clouds pulsate with good cheer. "Have a good day!" "Happy Birthday!" "Friendly!" they shout at us. While hardly cynical, their relentless *bonhomie* can be unnerving. Touching upon the sentimentality of popular culture and stereotypical templates of femininity, the artist forces us all to relate feminine to feminist, art to decoration, and cynicism to out-and-out positivism. Says the artist, "People ask me about my work. 'How can you make art about being happy? The world is a terrible place!,' they say. My answer is, 'Can you not see this positivism as a subject matter in and of itself?' Other people explore landscape painting and I explore love and friendly images. But that is still not enough. I think that it is related to the lack of tenderness in technology and science. People generally think that intelligence and gentleness are incompatible. I don't agree." She connects her use of text with feminist artist of eighties whose worked opened up a new world to her. "When the use of words came in, it was suddenly so much more exciting. It made your communication so much faster. I could just put the world 'sex' in a painting and everybody knew that the work was about sex!" In a sense, her cheery murals recall the environmental paintings of the Abstract Expressionists. Rather than envelope you with their angst, van der Stokker's bodacious pods smack you silly with joy.