

Wallspace is pleased to present an exhibition by New York-based artist Donelle Woolford. This will be the artist's second show at the gallery. Through her work Donelle Woolford investigates myth and the process by which art and literature contribute images, characters and story lines to the public discourse and, through that circulation, become real.

Donelle Woolford's new paintings focus on Cubism's obsession with portraiture, surface tension, and multiple points of view. They are influenced not only by her desire to revisit the synthetic innovations of Picasso and Braque, but also by her exposure over the past few years and her increasing desire to have her paintings— and herself—return the exposure. As psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan wrote: "I am not simply the punctiform located at the point from which perspective is grasped. No doubt, in the depths of my eye, the picture is painted. The picture, certainly, is in my eye. But I, I am in the picture."

This "return," or self-recognition, occurs on many layers in Woolford's exhibition, each layer a slightly disarming revelation previously concealed from view. For example, Woolford's collage paintings are assembled from scrap wood, a material that symbolizes conflicting feelings of comfort and alienation because it comes from Nature and, since we are part of Nature, symbolizes a disembodiment of ourselves. Woolford's paintings also resemble Cubism, an art movement whose perceptual innovations still haunt our notions of reality and identity, to the extent that the style itself can have the effect of looking in a mirror that is looking back at us, a semblance of our pulsatile selves in symbolic form. And then there is Donelle Woolford herself, the ultimate art world *déjà vu*: a conflicted, talented, 32-year-old artist making her way through the world any way she can, all the while enjoying the background privilege of an Ivy League education and the comfort of supportive professional parents.

In fact, Donelle Woolford is not a real person at all, but a fictional character whose story is unfolding before our eyes. Donelle Woolford is comprised of a set of overlapping tropes—emerging artist, African American, working girl, avatar—all of which are shaped through her portrayal by different actors and the reception those portrayals receive from venue to venue. Thus people who have seen Donelle Woolford performed in the United Arab Emirates by Namik Minter, or in London (Abigail Ramsay), or at her first Wallspace show (Jennifer Kidwell), will find still new variations of the character again at Wallspace, where Ms. Kidwell and Ms. Ramsay will portray her simultaneously.

It is through these plays of interpretation and memory that Donelle Woolford's story, Rashomon-like, contradicts itself and moves forward.

Donelle Woolford was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1977. She has had one-person shows at Galerie Chez Valentin, Paris; Galerie de Expeditie, Amsterdam; and Artissima, Torino. She has participated in the 8th Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates, Double Agent at the ICA, London, and Paper Exhibition at Artists Space, New York. In June she published her “Plot Structure and Character Development” in La Copia, Lo Falso (Y El Original), XV Jornadas De Estudio de la Imagen de la Comunidad de Madrid, Spain. She lives in New York City.

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