

FOXY PRODUCTION

ESTER PARTEGÀS SATURATED FAT

September 7 – October 14, 2006

Saturated Fat, New-York based artist Ester Partegàs' second solo exhibition at Foxy Production, combines drawings on Mylar, collaged digital prints, a sculpture, and a mural, in an exhibition that cannily articulates tensions around consumption and excess. Partegàs is interested in the expression and resistance that somehow escapes through fissures in an ever-hardening climate of scrutiny and control of public and private spaces. Taking the city street, its people, products, and refuse as her starting point, Partegàs creates darkly gestural images that consider how ideas of individuality and collectivity evolve and devolve within the contemporary landscape.

On entering the exhibition space, one is struck by super-sized chain links that destabilize one's sense of scale. The work mines Pop's witty heritage of amplifying everyday objects, while suggesting conflicting meanings: of banishment and unity, of confinement and incorporation. Partegàs sets in relief the complex relationship between object and sign: here the chain's irresolute symbolism of both control and connectivity.

The chain motif is also used in a mural covering two walls of the space. With letters forming the word "barbarian", the work resembles an enormous, subversive charm bracelet. Strikingly linking the sculpture to the works on the walls, the mural appears to map the play of relations presented within the exhibition as a whole.

Two large drawings from Partegàs' Barricade series lean against the wall. Drawn on layers of Mylar plastic, with pieces of colored paper between them, these complex works use trash as an edgy signifier of the struggle between the corporate and the corporeal. Among litter overflowing from trashcans, words form statements that seem to obliquely critique contemporary life, like a damning return of the repressed. Partegàs indicates that within our ever more supervised and restrained experience, it is in the rejected, the unclean, and the surplus that deposits of creativity, agency, and defiance can be discovered.

A series of digital collages comprise black and white documentary style photographs of mid-city streets overlaid with spray paint and marker effects, and text from glossy magazine advertisements. The upper-bodies of people in the street are hidden by expressive graphic marks: drips and dots that create clouds of headless people, like collective alien life forms. Our eyes are drawn to their shopping bags, whose text and symbols resemble trademarked comments in displaced speech bubbles, while the collaged appropriated texts seem to dramatize their experiences of desire, fulfillment, and waste.

ESTER PARTEGÀS (La Garriga, Barcelona, 1972) holds a BFA from the Universitat de Barcelona and has completed postgraduate studies in Multimedia at Hochschule der Kunste, Berlin. Selected solo exhibitions include: Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia (2006); Cercle Cultural CajaMadrid, Barcelona (2006); Rice University Art Gallery, Houston, Texas (2003). Selected group exhibitions: 'Busan Biennale', Busan, South Korea (2006); 'Please Love Me', Walker's Point Center for the Arts (2006); 'Make It Now. Sculpture in New York', Sculpture Center, Long Island City, New York (2005); 'Outer City/Inner Space', Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, New York (2002); Partegàs has been featured in Flash Art, Tema Celeste, Sculpture, Cabinet, ABC Cultural, Lapid and ArtText.

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