



# The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

*Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper*

Kerry Stevens

Beauty & Obsession

September 7 - October 10, 2006



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# Kerry Stevens

## Beauty & Obsession

The paper has the slip sheen of wet porcelain clay, a slightly opalescent gray. The brushed linear, flowing elements traverse the outer borders of the paper, every now and then curving or crossing over each. The central space is empty. And yet from the titles (all are titled "Torso") the central space is where the meat of the matter usually physically resides - the corporeal body, the torso. Kerry Stevens presents a conceptual composition, placing the depiction of a person, not center stage, but as a silhouette, yet not with the light from behind so that the body blocks and becomes a form, but as if only the shimmering line that enhances a body that is back lit as if *only* this line of light has been recorded and not once, but several times as in a long exposure photograph of a moving body. Aura paintings and spirit photographs inhabit the same plane. There is also the suggestion of veins and body fluids in the viscous, milky lines.

The sculptural torsos, easily cupped in the palm, have an undisguised clay-ness and brings about biblical associations. The brushed patina on the gray clay form is an earth clay color. The size brings to mind creation stories for the figure in its diminutive dimension suggests God-like size in the creator. Kerry Stevens' hand has squeezed, molded, pinched and smoothed the torso, pressed a nipple. She twisted the clay so that one torso appears to be moving as it is cradled for examination in the hand. Fingers are seduced to caress and wander the delicate curves of this minute, flesh-like form. The wonder at the perfection of the small torso is a very similar response to that inspired by handling a new born.

The relationship between the paper works and the sculptures is strong as if they are a part of the same family. Their coloring supports the affiliation as well as the sensual disposition of the bodily forms as if they are part of a race that dances in acknowledgement of their creator.



Torso Study 13  
gouache on paper  
30 x 22 in  
2006



Torso Study II  
un-fired clay, gouache  
5 x 2 x 2 in  
2006



Torso Study 3  
gouache on paper  
30 x 22 in  
2006



Torso Study 9  
gouache on paper  
30 x 22 in  
2006





Torso Study IV  
un-fired clay, gouache  
5 x 2 x 2 in  
2006



Torso Study 5  
gouache on paper  
30 x 22 in  
2006



Torso Study 11  
gouache on paper  
30 x 22 in  
2006



Torso Study IX  
un-fired clay, gouache  
5 x 2 x 2 in  
2006



Torso Study 8  
gouache on paper  
30 x 22 in  
2006



Torso Study VII  
un-fired clay, gouache  
5 x 2 x 2 in  
2006

# Kerry Stevens

## Select Exhibitions

- 2006 Beauty and Obsession, Headbones Gallery, The Drawers, Toronto, Canada
- 2006 Sticky Fingers, Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY
- 2005 Alumni Invitational, New York University
- 2004 Being, Kean University, Union, New Jersey
- 2003 Recontres Internationale, Paris 2002/ Berlin 2003
- 2003 Notebook, Artscape, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore
- 2002 Life Of The City, Museum of Modern Art, New York City
- 2002 A Gathering of the Tribes 10th Anniversary Exhibition, New York City
- 2001 Venice, Casa Italiana, New York City
- 2001 Tribes Gallery, New York City (Solo)
- 2000 Absence/Presence, Clara Scarpapella e gli americani, Purchase Prize, Citta di Brescia, Italy
- 2000 Small Works, PS. 122, New York City
- 1999 Downtown Arts Festival, Open Studios Tour, New York City
- 1999 1133 Sixth Avenue Gallery, New York City (Solo)
- 1998 Collaborations, with Elizabeth Castagna & Virginia Hoge, Williamsburg, NY
- 1998 Keep Breathing, Keep Shouting: Artists and Writers Collaborating, with poet David Cameron, 450 Broadway Gallery, New York City

## Annual Participation

- Night of 1,000 Drawings, Artists Space, New York City
- Charlie Parker Festival, Tribes Gallery, New York City
- Affordable Art Fair, New York City

## Public Collections

- Clara Scarpapella Collection, Brescia, Italy
- Museum of Modern Art, New York City
- National Women's Museum, Washington, DC

## Education

- 2000 MA Painting, Venice Masters Program, New York University
- 1985 BFA School of Fine Arts, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

## Torso Studies

These small clay pieces were created as preliminary sketches, to develop a fresh set of drawing muscles. They have not only contributed a visual reference for the new works on paper, but they have also become totems, generating the energy of the muse.

As the torso emerged from the clay and then evolved into painting--a relationship, though not always obvious, was realized. The feeling tone is deference and mutual respect. The dry, flat and brittle gouache and the solemn and somber palette--warm into cool and back again--honor the elegance and fragility of the human form, home to the human heart.

*Kerry Stevens*



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