



The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper

Ellen Butler

Ethnic Convergence

February 22 - April 3, 2007



Commentary by Julie Oakes

Ellen Butler

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Commentary by Julie Oakes
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Ellen Butler

Julie Oakes

The attraction of intimacy and the closeness required to wander over the details is offset by an overall lingering pleasure in the perusal of the whole with all of its misty subtleties. The coloring, as in ancient Chinese scrolls, is evocative with muted monochromatic simplicity.

The romantics were absorbed with the contemplation of the passing of time and the vulnerability of beauty. In Ellen Butler's work, the image seems to disintegrate before our eyes and the only semblance of stasis is the Chinese symbol. There is the suggestion of immeasurable distance yet a stellar glow appears to emanate off of the floating or falling biological forms. There is, as well, a haze that partially obfuscates them. The sense of dissemblance in process is counterbalanced by the suspicion that this might be a frozen moment in time that has been irrevocably captured on paper for inspection. In contrast, the Chinese symbol fixes this floating world by marking the time or suggesting a place that is foreign to our Western knowledge bank for we cannot interpret the symbol or translate the dark scrawl that appears to be from an exotic language. As the symbol sinks into the paper with its shadowed recessing, the impression of a cloudy environment turns to stone. The illusion to otherness is fixed within a reference of desire - dewy, gorgeous and illusive.

The process is mysterious and Ellen Butler has the technical acumen to pull from many. There is the hint of photography. The frozen yarn-like squiggles resemble the microscopic traces of cellular life forms captured between specimen slides. The edges of the veins have the look of silverpoint. It is the enhancement of inherent loveliness through the hand of a competent beautician that seduces us into the consideration of beauty and the sublime.



'Silver leaves' Mixed media on paper 4x5' - 2002-06



'Deep Jungle' Mixed media on paper 4x5'



'Dark light' Mixed media on paper 6'x2.5'



'Imprints' Mixed media on canvas 16" x 12"



'Malay' Mixed media on paper 4x5'



'Leaf' Mixed media on paper 4x5'



'Jungle' Mixed media on paper 4'x5'



'Asia' Mixed media on paper 8'X4'



'Fronde' Mixed media on paper 10'x4.5'



'Silver leaves & Symbol' Mixed media on paper 4x5'

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