

ANN GLAZER



WOMEN & THEIR WORK

NOVEMBER 20 – DECEMBER 23, 2004

AUSTIN, TEXAS

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That law of thermodynamics—the one about matter being neither created nor destroyed, but only transformed—keeps popping up when I look at Ann Glazer's work. That and thoughts of entropy, graciousness, moving furniture, children's games, theater and cooking.

Glazer makes many different sorts of things and sets up several kinds of situations that seem quite casual, but are conceived and realized with utmost consideration and thoughtfulness. A lot of what she makes as art also reverberates in other dimensions of life. This is an uncommon accomplishment, but Glazer succeeds where many others fail because she makes art in a way that parallels her making of other things.

Glazer makes art by starting with what is available. That may mean a treasured clutch of porcupine quills gathered in Italy or a batch of foam rubber discs bought just down the street—or some other charismatic material in its raw state, just waiting for the right moment to get on stage. Or it could be a group of drawings or something else Glazer previously had made, but temporarily set aside. Either way, these things undergo a fresh process of sorting that leads to certain elements being used and others, again, set aside for another opportunity—or for the same opportunity, but in a later stage of development.

Glazer also looks for, and finds, entirely new, fresh things to put into the mix. She recombines her ingredients, maybe adds more or takes things out, moves a few more things around. At some point, it will be sufficient for presentation, without being definitive.

For this installation at Women & Their Work, Glazer has anticipated how things will work in the space, but also assumed she'd need to make on-site adjustments. I know all of this sounds rudimentary, but there are plenty of artists, just as there are plenty of cooks, who can't gracefully, or even awkwardly, take these issues into account.

Glazer has developed an overall arrangement in which certain elements zoom around briskly, while other things droop and dribble, and still others become tangled up



Series 5, #2. 2004, Ink on paper. 8.5" x 11.5"

into impenetrable, convoluted wads. She's thought about texture and about a variety of linear directions, variations of shape and scale. She has made careful, understated use of color, including ample use of blacks and whites as color. Some ingredients stand out clearly, but not too clearly, from the general flux. There are things to recognize and things to enjoy, even when they can't be recognized. Or maybe precisely because they can't be recognized but, instead, tease the possibility of recognition.

Among the materials she has employed are India ink, paper, the previously mentioned foam pads, velour, wooden planks, feathers, lights, light stands, and sheets of plywood.

Glazer has taken up these media and moved into the realm of installation without ever really leaving behind the paintings and drawings for which she was known some years ago. Literally and metaphorically, she brings artifacts and precepts of her two dimensional work into 3-D space, real space that can be experienced as though it were purely optical but also entered so that certain elements can be examined more closely in all their flatness or volume or degrees in between. Her work recalls Jessica Stockholder's, but is more firmly rooted in drawing than is Stockholder's.

There's a delicious uncertainty on the viewer's part when, kibitzing, as it were, on one of Glazer's installations. It's a bit like walking in on a slightly inebriated and very informal dinner party going on in a too-small apartment. For a moment, perhaps, everything seems frozen in place. Then, suddenly, everything re-animates. All of the sights, the sounds, the smells invade the senses.

To wit: for this installation, Glazer has delved into her stock of different kinds of India ink drawings, pulled out silhouettes of recognizable things; an old stove, chair or winging birds, and cut them out so that they exist as objects. She has isolated, literally abstracted, various gestural elements from some of her children's pictures, enlarged them and, similarly, cut them out. By choosing not to distinguish abstraction from representation, Glazer skirts the programmatic strategies of other artists who employ silhouettes for pointed, narrative ends.



SON. 2004, Cut-out drawings on paper. Dimensions Variable.

Loosening our culture's collective grip on those fixed shadows, she reminds us of their mystery, their potential for play, their shiftiness, even when they physically are pinned to the wall. Instead of burdening them with rhetoric, Glazer lets her silhouettes dance. She evokes, on one level, visual poetry and, on another, a kid holding her hand in front of a flashlight and mimicking heads of dogs and ducks. She reminds me of that farcical pantomime of surgery, where the shade of a doctor pulls tools, toys and other weird things from the body of a shadow patient.

Elsewhere, Glazer had scattered around intact sheets of her own inchoate, yet eloquent, ink drawings — on the floor, on ad hoc plywood tables, on planks placed end-to-end, like chutes on a board game. Even partially obscured, however, the lengths of wood help define

the installation's boundaries and interior space. They create a succession of horizontals that recede in real space, but they also serve as framing verticals and as foreshortened diagonals that invoke the mechanics of linear perspective.

Other of the installation's contours, vectors and jostling shapes are defined by taut loops of rubber hose that lie on the floor, seeming simultaneously recumbent and poised to spring, or by skeins of black velour, clumped on the wall and trailing off in various directions on the floor. In other places, black feathers are aligned to explicate the potential path of one's twirling descent, or to mimic the spread of splattered ink.

Elsewhere, Glazer has removed some of the above silhouettes from the wall, where they ordinarily would reside, and piled them on other horizontal surfaces. Thinking about this, I'm reminded of a kitchen in which every surface is covered with racks, sheets and plates of cooling cookies, with more in the oven.

Thus, even a viewer encountering Glazer's work at a particular time and in a particular place realizes its multidirectional, multidimensional flow. Most elements within the work actually are static, yet suggest motion that, in turn, is contained by Glazer's broad sense of composition. What gives the installation its potential for expansion is not, for example, the trajectory of certain lines running off the edges, as in a painting by Jackson Pollock. It's Glazer's exquisite integration of artistic and everyday elements for purposes that, again, balance the aesthetic and the quotidian, such that the two realms become mutually animating.

Yet there also are things that literally move, gently and unpredictably. Some of those cut out silhouettes occasionally flap against the wall, stirred by air moving in the room. Here and there, wired strands of velour protrude and bob about, like quirky vectors in the process of deciding where to go. Yet another species of velour dangles almost, but not quite, listlessly.

What results, then, is a tension between what has happened and what could happen sooner or later. Glazer has activated space and the things within it, but also has activated or charged viewer's expectations with the possibilities of dimensions within dimensions, of an infinitely reducible, latent potential in her work. Conversely, she alludes to things as ingredients within larger things that are found, in turn, in an even more expansive universe of possibility. Neither the gallery nor the viewer's mind can contain art that, in Glazer's mind, already is being transformed.

Janet Tyson,
Artist and Writer
Fort Worth, Tx 2004

ANN GLAZER
Resides in Dallas, TX

EDUCATION

1983 MFA, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
1989 BA, Brown University, Providence, RI

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2004 *Women & Their Work*, Austin, TX
2002 McKinney Avenue Contemporary, Dallas, TX
2000 Conduit Gallery Annex, Dallas, TX
1992 AIR Gallery, New York, NY
1984 DW Gallery, Dallas, TX

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2003 *Make a Wish*, Dallas Center for Contemporary Art, Dallas, TX
Wall Power, Dallas Center for Contemporary Art, Dallas, TX
2001 *Drawn*, Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas, TX
2000 *Red*, Arlington Museum, Arlington, TX
1999 *A Hot Show*, Arlington Museum, Arlington, TX

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

2002 Tara Aveilhe, *Wall Power*, ARTLIES, Summer 2002
Annabelle Helber, *Running with Scissors*, Dallas Observer, June 27
1999 Mike Daniel, *Heat Wave*, Dallas Morning News, July 2
Annabelle Helber, *Hot Stuff*, The Met, July 21
1985 Bill Marvel, *Stained-glass Feel Translated to Canvas*, Dallas Times Herald, April 21

AWARDS

1984 Anne Giles Kimbrough Award, Dallas Museum of Art
1983 Fred Forster Fellowship, Art Institute of Chicago



Installation View. 2004, Ink on paper drawings. Dimensions Variable.



This Panel: *Series 5, #4*. 2004, Ink on paper. 8.5" x 11.5"

Cover Panel: *Installation View*. 2004, Cut-out drawings on paper. Dimensions Variable.



Photograph by Harrison Evans

Installation View, 2004, Ink on paper drawings. Dimensions Variable.

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Now celebrating its 26th anniversary, Women & Their Work presents over 50 events a year in visual art, dance, theater, music, literature, and film. The gallery features on-going exhibitions of Texas women artists and brings artists of national stature to Texas audiences. Since its founding, Women & Their Work has presented 1,744 artists in 228 visual art exhibitions, 102 music, dance, and theater events, 13 film festivals, 19 literary readings, and 276 work-shops in programming that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of this region. Nationally recognized, Women & Their Work has been featured in *Art in America*, *ArtForum* and National Public Radio and was the first organization in Texas to receive a grant in visual art from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Women & Their Work reaches over 5,000 school children and teachers each year through gallery tours, gallery talks with exhibiting artists, participatory workshops, in-school performances, dance master classes, and teacher workshops.



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