

EXHIBITED

Ghetto Gloss Gallery / Los Angeles, CA
Ellis Van Pelt Building Open Studios / Tampa, FL

I Want You to Want Me

2004 - 2005

A cacophony of pressures, both real and imaginary, inundates the mind of today's woman. To be awake is to hear a chorus of demands: seduce, radiate, decorate, work, earn, give, clean, deodorize, augment, emaciate, cover, reveal, whiten, tan, mother, nurture, etc. The supposed expectation of playing every role is overwhelming. We know we cannot have it all. But at the core of our womanhood is a desire to want it anyway. Kim West's eerily amusing, purposefully pretty works are a visual crystallization of this inherently modern, feminine dream. In much the same way that a blockbuster film, a tabloid weekly, or a "guilty pleasure" television show helps to momentarily distance us from the unfriendly limitations of life, West's provocative work temporarily quells our anxiety over what appears utterly unattainable, making our secret wish for the total fulfillment of everything seem not only possible,

but natural as well. West's imagery is inspired by a relentless media - "the contradictory, meticulously crafted, gorgeous world of magazines and celluloid" - where beauty reigns supreme.

To mock media representations of women is nothing new. Kim West's innovation lies in her ability to produce pleasing, captivating pieces that acknowledge the absurdity of such imagery while simultaneously provoking within the viewer a desire to mimic what she derides. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, she manages to provide the breathing room to do so. Lacking any specific skin tone, these beauties exist merely as black outline. Their limbs, torsos, and faces are nearly always the same demure color as whatever nameless backdrop they drift upon. Like the beckoning postcard pictures of deserted sandy beaches or

isolated famous monuments we know in reality to be crowded with cranky tourists, here we are given the space to project ourselves into the scene, enjoying the fantasy of glamour without having to examine the cost incurred in reality.

The true beauty of her work lies not merely in the women she portrays but in what those glamorous gals call upon us to question. Still, as West makes clear, we might as well have a little girly fun in the process.

-Tania Zubkus, 2005

Tania Zubkus is VP of the Guide Advisory Committee at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago where she has worked since 1999. She has a BA in Art History and Psychology from Cornell University and an MA from the University of Chicago. She lives with her husband and two children in Oak Park, Illinois.

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: All She Ever Thinks About :: 2005

housepaint, acrylic on canvas / 60" x 72"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: Before You Learn How to Walk You Learn to Rollerskate :: 2005

housepaint, acrylic on canvas / 72" x 48"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: Big Hair is Always Sexy :: 2005

housepaint, enamel on board / 24" diameter

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DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: El Paso Booty I - IV :: 2005

housepaint, enamel, glitter glue on board / 14" x 12" each

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: I'm Sure That I Could Be a Movie Star :: 2005

housepaint, glitter dust, ink on canvas / 42" x 46"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: I Want You to Want Me :: 2005

housepaint, gouache on canvas / 48" x 60"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: Maintaining a Hip Existence :: 2005

housepaint, ink on canvas / 48" x 96"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: She Was the Kind of Girl Who Walks in Thru Out Door :: 2005

oil, sequin, pins on linen / 48" x 48"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: Magic In Her Pink Palms :: 2005

oil on linen / 48" x 48"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: Modern School of Charm :: 2004

marker, gouache on paper / 52" x 38"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: Ribbons and Bows are Youthful and Tasteful :: 2005

marker, gouache on paper / 31" x 46"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS



I Want You to Want Me :: The Birds and the Bees :: 2004

graphite, gouache on paper / 31" x 46"

PAINTINGS



DRAWINGS

