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Art in Review; 5 X U

By HOLLAND COTTER Published: July 22, 2005

Team Gallery

527 West 26th Street, Chelsea Through today

This all-male group show has, for the most part, a boys-will-be-boys feeling. Slater Bradley contributes a mural-size group portrait photograph of participants at a "Star Wars" convention in Indianapolis, with a big Darth Vader but no Princess Leias in sight. Sterling Ruby's "Cry," a digital montage of close-up images of meat and honey, is like a seductively polished version of open-your-mouth-while-eating gross-out art.

David B. Sherry's nondigital photographic paeans to young men suggest a soft, yielding side of traditional masculinity: the bare torso of one young man is half-observed by radiance, like Danae's body showered with gold. By contrast, the reveling figures in David Ratcliff's painting "Cheers," which was made with paint sprayed through an elaborately cut stencil, are razor-sharp. They raise their collective toast with a cool, dandyish panache.

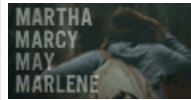
Torbjorn Rodland's video projection "Heart All This & Dogg" stands a little outside everything else. Filmed in Norway, where the artist is based, it seems to be an account, depicted in short, wordless episodes, of a day in the life, from sunrise to sunset, of some young women in a woodland cottage by a lake.

There is a fairy-tale atmosphere to much of the piece, as the women sleep, swim and closely observe plants, animals and one another. But every now and then, something seems jarring. In one image a pair of feet dangle in midair as if a woman had hanged herself; she is, in fact, sitting on a swing. And there is a single, central, masculine intrusion in an interpolated television image of rappers -- Eminem, Snoop Dogg -- performing. Their percussive music seems to chip away at the idyll, though the women seem not to notice.

One of the most interesting things about new art is how gender specificity has melted down. In the 1950's, a leftover masculine model still prevailed; in the 1970's feminine models clearly defined themselves. Now such divisions are moot. As often as not, it is hard to tell whether a woman or a man is producing work. I looked at Mr. Rodland's film in that light. In fact, if anything, new art by boys is looking more and more like old art by girls, which is a particularly healthy sign. HOLLAND COTTER

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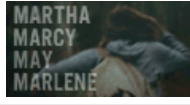
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