

KASHYA HILDEBRAND GALLERY

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For immediate release.

Brand New Works | Tianbing Li & Yichu Chen | April 20 –May 27, 2006

Kashya Hildebrand Gallery is pleased to present *Brand New Works* by Chinese artists, Tianbing Li and Yichu Chen. This is Li's third show at Kashya Hildebrand and Chen's first.

Tianbing Li does not comment, criticize or denounce. He lets the viewer enter into and experience his pictorial world whose object is to bring to the fore an inevitable reality, namely, the advent of material desires. Although the models painted by Tianbing Li are essentially Chinese, they go well beyond the context of their geographical and cultural origin, appealing to a larger audience. The interbred nature of the artist's work is precisely what constitutes its force and universal sensitivity. In this work, Tianbing Li uses the power of suggestion, abandoning the aggressiveness found in some of his earlier work. China is a starting point, however, the artist's observations concern West - an inveterate and confirmed consumer; and East - which is only just discovering the ephemeral joys of artificially generated desires.

As for the children in Li's new work, they are programmed from the start to be transformed into model consumers. Jovial and paradoxically faded and blurred, their faces appear to be suspended in time. This impression is accentuated by the absence of colors generally used to depict childhood. Large paint spots alter the surface and sinusoids and random cracks outline the geography of a hysterical desire to consume. On foreheads and cheeks manufacturers have already affixed their seals: the name and logo of their brand and sometimes a bar code. Chanel, Bosch, Olympus, Louis Vuitton, Haagen-Dazs, Adidas, Mercedes-Benz - all names that can be read on the surface of the skin which adorn the faces like scarifications.

In the work of Yichu Chen the Brand is transformed into a jealous and fickle entity, watching out for the slightest quiver of collective desires and aiming at establishing the loyalty of its subjects at any cost. Like a ferocious little monster, the Brand is encouraged by the rise in individualism with vanity following in its wake. It becomes a source of valorization, directly linked to self-esteem and serves as a barometer of personal success. The logical consequence, long-term satisfaction, becomes impossible and only suffering marks the utopic quest for happiness. We desire too much in the wrong way.

Natalia Grigorieva (Translation: Marie Scorca)