



May 10, 2010

Recipe for Karin Broker's newest show *Oddities and Other Opinions*

- 1 curiosity cabinet
- 2 cups Joseph Cornell
- 1 tablespoon Chuy's Mexican Restaurant
- 1 cup Dada
- 2 cups Gramma Beth who is also a hoarder
- 1-1/2 tablespoons of Venice, Italy
- 1 dash of the apocalypse

Broker has had a working relationship with McLain Gallery for a while now and the love seems to be strong. Her show alongside the works of John Alexander, Jeff Shore, and Jo Fisher opened last Thursday and showcases a wide variety of mediums and subjects. The spectrum includes 3-dimensional art objects, drawings, objects made from tin, nails, and reused items, and even good ole' fashioned drawings. There is one particular drawing that I liked in a way that you adore the recognition of hardcore skill, precision, and the mastery of tedium. Unfortunately, my blackened artistic heart remained unstirred by this alone- the first time I looked at it, that is. The title completely altered my point of view: *Fat girl with nest*. Almost immediately I began to look for something more, something I had missed. I poured over the edges, the lines, the narratives and I didn't find much else- but the pursuit was evasive and satisfying. That particular form of manipulation in art is seductive.

More than anything I fell for the art objects. They seem too young and precious to be called sculptures. There is a cartoon-like personality to each one. I imagine them waking up in the night and playing together in some strange non-Mannequin kind of way. Pre-80's bedazzling that is reminiscent of Venetian store-fronts and Baroque Catholic churches, objects that beg all sorts of questions like guns, axes, globes, and oddities. These objects are loaded and meant to (be) viewed as the devastatingly common symbols that they are. In her press release Broker reveals that her work stems from "...weaving femininity, beauty, and optimism with severity, tragedy and aging." These seem like broad statements but they apply. I recommend this show. I'd tell my mother to go to it I recommend it so much. And while you're there I dare you to push the button to the piece call *Cliffhanger*.