



Lisi Raskin, *Control Tower*, collaged paper, 46" x 54", 2008

Chris Jahncke: Occupational Therapy
Lisi Raskin: Project Estrange
(and Other Research)
and Julie Orser: Blood Work

The Company, Los Angeles

The title of Chris Jahncke's show, *Occupational Therapy*, was eerily appropriate. The repetition of lines and subdued color in Jahncke's paintings are slowly paced, like studies for a larger whole, possibly an homage to the embedded power of the meteorite fragments that Jahncke uses literally as focal points secured in the center of certain works. Even in the cramped confines of the gallery space, the small works were endearing, suggesting a hybrid between Yoshimoto Nara and Mark Grotjahn, but achieving a childlike charm in the most symmetrical pieces.

Occupying a side room were the collaged paper landscapes of Lisi Raskin. The source images for these landscapes were taken from the Swedish Space Corporation Estrange Launch Site. The landscapes are engaging in their construction but oddly un-desolate in their ultimate appearance. The technology-referencing sources in each collage (a laboratory office, the exterior of a high security building with a snowy landscape) contrast curiously with Raskin's paper-scissors-and-glue approach.

In the back "garage", Julie Orser's 3-minute video *Blood Work* tropes and trips on that iconic element of horror movies, fake blood. It's splashed, sprayed, and poured into odd objects, including a white handbag, a teddy bear, and a cell phone. It's even sprayed on a screen projection of the movie *Carrie*. Orser's video doesn't quite demystify phony blood, but it does make a humorous point about the division between real horror and the façade of construction of the film genre.

— Lia Trinko-Browner

Holly Andres: Sparrow Lane

DNJ Gallery, Los Angeles

In Holly Andres' solo exhibition, puberty-anxiety never looked so good. This display of fifteen large-format color photographs and a wall installation (mirrors, candles, and smaller-framed photos) by the Portland-based artist dresses up pretty girls in storybook narratives to articulate awkward sexual development. Graced with a Pre-Raphaelite flare for dramatic gesture, rich color, scintillating detail and literary reference, Andres revels in female pubescence with an *Alice in Wonderland* brand of pathological voyeurism that would have delighted Lewis Carroll. But where Carroll was content to keep the "present" wrapped in both his literary fantasies and his obsessive photographs of young girls, Andres directs her starlets to pry loose the lid of the metaphorical box safeguarding illicit sexual consciousness.

Staged in and around "Grandma's house," these technically dazzling photographs function as melodramatic signposts guiding feminine somatics and psycho-social identity. Both these goals are bound here to maternal haunting (second-hand vintage clothes are worn in many of the scenes, suggesting mommy's wardrobe) and Eve's forbidden fruit transgression. In images like *The Golden Pillow*, *The Glowing Drawer* and *The Red Purse*, everyday objects become estrogenic metaphors that engender an awkward, conspiratorial sexual awareness. The empty birdcage in *The Missing Bird* testifies to the cost of this awakening: innocence lost. In *The Secret Portal*, these juvenescent prisoners start looking—as we all must eventually—for an escape route away from the nest and into the wider world, where carnal pleasures and fertility banking await.

Sparrow Lane is a Freudian-infested adventure overloaded with Victorian baggage. Underneath the sentimental aesthetics in all of the photographs (old locations, props, costumes) lurk prudish, mid-nineteenth century English notions of female purity and conduct. Andres turns immense contemporary psychosexual female identity challenges—the kinds faced head-on by fellow photographers like Lauren Greenfield (*Girl Culture*)—into charming, easy-to-swallow yesterdays.

— Darrin Little



Holly Andres, *The Secret Portal*, digital c-print, 50" x 40", 2008. Courtesy the Artist and DNJ Gallery.