

# POLYTECHNIC

AT MICHAEL STEINBERG FINE ART

## For Immediate Release

Andrea Champlin

*Splashdown*

May 14 – June 18, 2004

Reception, May 14, 6-8 PM

Polytechnic at Michael Steinberg Fine Art is pleased to present *Splashdown*, the first New York solo exhibition by Andrea Champlin. On view from May 14 through June 18, 2004, the show includes three large-scale, abstract, figure on ground oil paintings that play within the traditional genres of landscape and self-portraiture.

While Champlin's compositions are clearly abstract they are not without form. Flesh-colored orbs and other less obvious shapes, hover, dance and do anything but sit within a constructed space the color of sky, water and plants. While they cannot be identified as figures per se these shapes have a weight and density that cast shadows and reflect light, indicating some kind of a body. Indeed they are. Before she begins to paint, Champlin sketches on the computer. With the help of digital manipulation, a single photograph of Champlin herself is repeatedly stretched, pulled, and recombined with fantastic results. The picture plane occupied by these remastered bits of flesh starts out as edge-to-edge pattern. Then through an intricate mastery of the medium Champlin gives depth to this otherwise decorative backdrop. Sections of canvas are left bare punching a hole in the paint. And highlight and shadow serve as more than mere decoration to the constituent forms that make up each repeat, contributing to the illusion of three-dimensional space.

Standing in front of the almost mural-sized "Snowgasm", the velvety texture of oil paint gives way to something deeper. An imaginary space opens and you feel as if you could step up into this psychedelic dream to frolic among the fountains of what could only be the title's effusive snow. The abstract landscape created for "Mojo Descending" implies a grotto, and the background pattern resembles a waterfall. White undulating bands on either side of the canvas read as clouds of rising steam. There is something sexy and alluring about this centralized pile of abstract mass. At the same time, the modernist flowers that lay in flat black on top of the canvas pull us back out of the painting as a reminder of the illusion of deep space that lies behind them.

Andrea Champlin lives and works in New York. She received a BFA from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, 1989, and a MFA from Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT, 1996. She has most recently had a solo show at Clifford Smith Gallery in Boston, MA, and has been included in group exhibitions at GV/AS, Hunter College and Detroit Artists' Market.

- Sarah Murkett

Gallery Hours:

Tuesday – Saturday

11 A.M. – 6 P.M.

For more information, please call:

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