



Portraits of Women

April 24, 2018 - 09:59 — ddlombardi

Like 3 Share



Persona: Process Portraiture
 The Cluster Gallery, Brooklyn
 Through April 28th

Curated by T. Michael Martin, *Persona: Process Portraiture* features four distinctly different artists who embrace, reflect upon and reject the preconceptions of identity. A smartly installed exhibition, it includes numerous works in a variety of grids and patterns without ever looking too crowded or overwhelming. I was even reminded, when I first arrived at street level to ascend the two flights of painted gray and well worn stairs, of the heyday of 1970s SoHo art scene when it was common to visit 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floor galleries by climbing creaky, uneven battleship grey stairs.

Main

- [Home](#) ●
- [Dusty's Music](#) ●
- [Dusty's Curiosities](#) ●
- [Video Podcasts](#) ●
- [Audio Podcasts](#) ●
- [Quote of the Week](#) ●
- [Events](#) ●

Read Reviews

- [Music](#) ●
- [Film](#) ●
- [Literature](#) ●
- [Theater](#) ●
- [Art](#) ●

Archives

- [Audio Podcasts](#) ●
- [Video Podcasts](#) ●

Search

Popular content

Today's:

- [Portraits of Women](#) ●
- [Inception: When Dreaming is Bad for You](#) ●
- [Vir Heroicus Sublimis](#) ●
- [Quote of the Week: Duke Ellington](#) ●

In Defense of the Eagles,
and Not Being a Jerk About
Recently Deceased
Musicians

All time:

Vanessa Carlton - The Dusty
Wright Show

The Best Scottish
Lubrication

David Lynch - The Dusty
Wright Show

About Us
Advertising

Last viewed:

Song of the Day: The High
Learys - "Clear My Mind"

From Warm To Cool

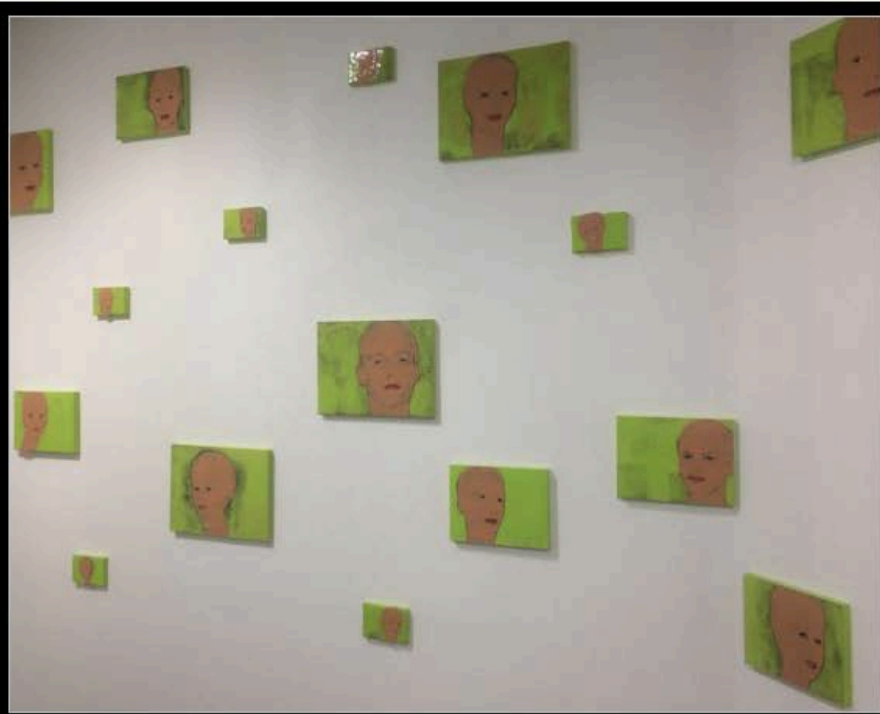
Come Out and Play

My Life an Album a Year:
Classical

They Shoot Horses Don't
They - The Dusty Wright
Show



Getting back to the art, Marcia Goldstein offers a number of small, stitched black, white and gray portraits of well-known female artists. Goldstein chooses her method and media to make commentary on those old adages about woman's work, however I never felt that these works were as politically and socially oriented as she intended until I read the press release. I saw them more as an intimate and laborious tribute to the lives and times of the important artists depicted. Perhaps this has something to do with my knowledge of the work of Ray Materson, and how he survived a 15-year stint in prison by taking apart his colorful socks stitch by stitch in order to create intimately stitched portraits and scenes based on his life and interests prior to his incarceration when he lived beyond the prison walls.



Judith Page is an artist whose work I know quite well. Her *Portraits in Plasma* series, which are photographs of prominent personalities obscured beyond recognition with shiny, muddy pink and acid green paint, are always stunning no matter how often I see them. By leaving only the eyes, mouth and an occasional nostril untouched, Page intensifies the space between what we wish others will see in us, and the real truth about us as flawed individuals. On the other hand, her 'painted' portraits look like some sort of future race from an odd science-fiction movie that was working with a great script and a low budget yet managed to create something quite memorable and profound.



Leah Schrage's art begins with her own image, which is either a selfie or one taken by a studio assistant, which is later partially painted or decorated. All of the original imagery here is at least in part about body beautiful and sexuality, while the second stage of painting or covering over of certain areas gives the work an obsessive quality – as if they were created by an admirer who is a little unstable or perhaps even dangerous. The artist intends to address censorship, which does come through, while her psychological investigations into self-portraiture are as much about her as they are the on-looker.



Gail Skudera follows suite by also beginning with a photograph, only in her case we are looking at vintage, sepia-toned found and family photographs. Skudera changes the pre-existing by cutting up, weaving, stitching and decorating them with a variety of media including hand-painted patterns or pre-existing wallpaper borders in some instances, to both focus and complicate the narrative. Overall, there is a subtle reshuffling of the visual data here that is not unlike what we have come to know in the digital world, sans the time and texture. - [D. Dominick Lombardi](#)

Mr. Lombardi is an artist with representation at the Kim Foster Gallery in New York, a writer with Sculpture and d'ART, and an independent curator.

