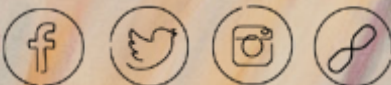


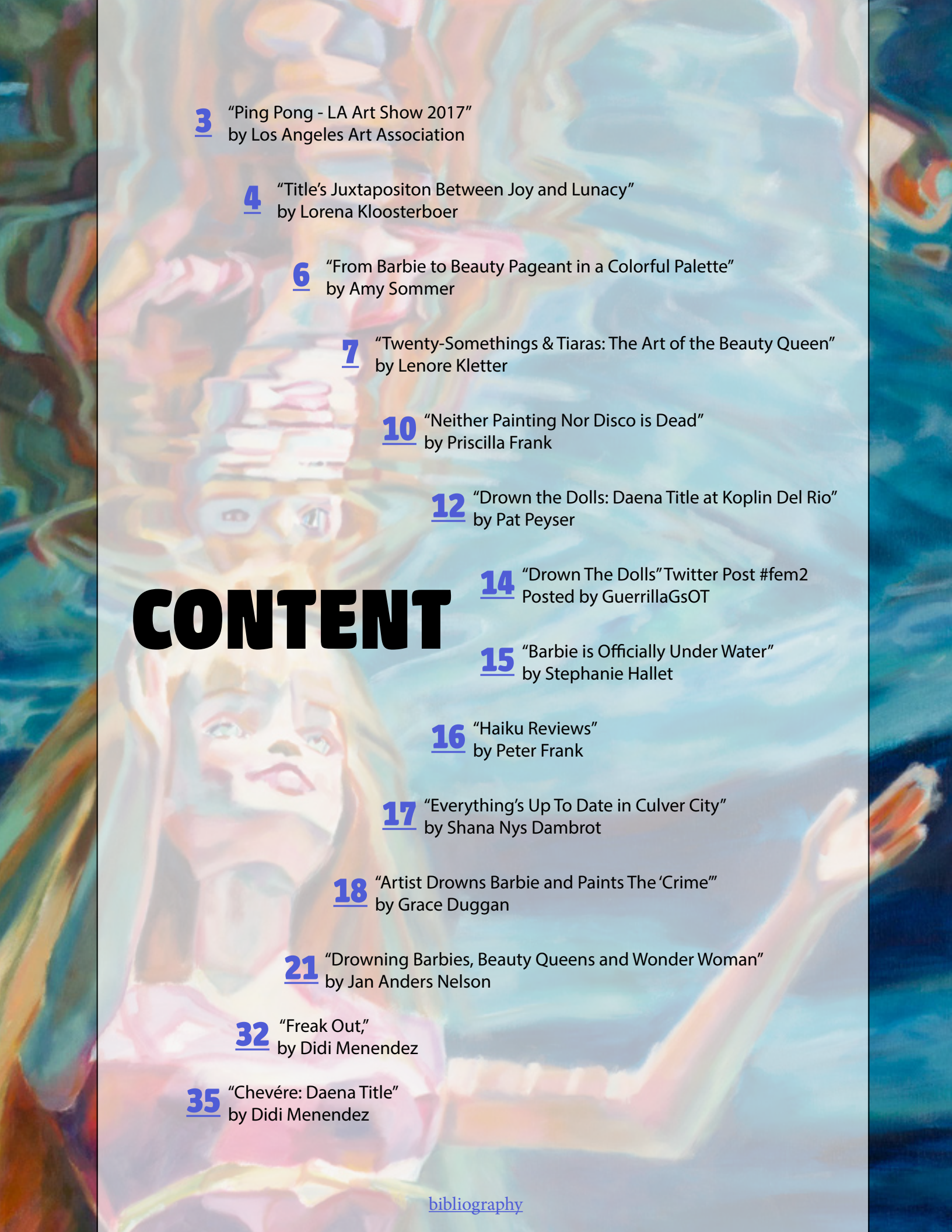
DAENA TITLE

Press Book



www.daenatitle.com

detitle@daenatitle.com



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Los Angeles Art Association

Los Angeles Art Association is proud to present PING PONG 2017, a multi-destination, cross-cultural collaboration featuring artists from Los Angeles, Miami and Basel at the 2017 LA Art Show.

LA ART SHOW 2017

MODERN | CONTEMPORARY

PING PONG is an independent exhibition project for contemporary art founded in 2007 to cultivate artistic exchange between Basel, Miami and Los Angeles. This allows collaboration between the Artists, as well as the realization of site specific works in the actual location. The project documents, explores and stimulates the artistic endeavors of the cities.



After exhibiting during Art Basel in June 2016 and Art Basel Miami Beach in December 2016, PING PONG makes its West Coast stop at the LA Art Show. Ping Pong will feature artists Ralph Buergin, Rob Grad, Carlos Grasso, Eddie Hara, Jacek J. Kolasinski, Gina M, Daena Title, Sue Irion, Mette Tommerup and Marleine van der Werf and Frederik Duerinck.

Location
Los Angeles Convention Center Booth 36
1201 South Figueroa Street West Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Opening Night Party
Wednesday, January 11, 2017
General Show Dates
Thursday January 12, 11am - 7pm
Friday January 13, 11am - 7pm
Saturday January 14, 11am - 7pm
Sunday, January 15, 11am - 5pm

For additional information please visit <http://www.laartshow.com/>



Top Images
Robert Grad,
Daena Title,
Marleine van der
Werf and
Frederik
Duerinck.

Los Angeles Art Association

About: Los Angeles Art Association (LAAA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide opportunities, resources, services and exhibition venues for emerging Los Angeles artists of all media. LAAA began as a civic art institution in the 1920s, connecting elite art interests to Hollywood collectors, emerging after World War II as the center of Los Angeles modernism and finally becoming the city's nexus for emerging artists of all media. LAAA serves as a dynamic force for contemporary ideas, outreach, and community. Gallery 825 and Los Angeles Art Association are located in the heart of La Cienega Boulevard's Restaurant Row at 825 North La Cienega Bl., Los Angeles, CA 90069. Gallery hours are 10am - 5pm, Tuesday - Saturday or by appointment. Please call 310.652.8272 or visit www.laaa.org.

Kloosterboer on Title

APRIL 20, 2017 · LORENA KLOOSTERBOER (/MAGAZINE/?AUTHOR=574463885559862FF40B038B)

Title's Juxtaposition between Joy & Lunacy

Daena Title's bright, energetic paintings focus on the strong seductive force of contemporary female icons. Loose, powerful brushstrokes and vivid colors help define Title's fascination with the ambiguous misrepresentation of beauty, feeling particularly drawn to the way heightened expressions of joy can cross a line into an ostensibly distorted or crazy appearance.

Playfully linking personal insights with frivolous visualizations, Title's intense expressionist pieces adroitly portray aspects of the inescapable love-hate relationship between women, and the consequent impact of those interactions on our self-esteem. By uniting representational and abstract styles, Title aims to break the rules yet remains both playful and honest in her quest to tell a story, offering dramatic, emotional content steeped in a strong dose of irony.



Daena Title | *Miss Selfie* | Oil on Canvas| 27 ½ x 45 inches or 69 ¾ x 114 ¼ cm

Title's vibrant painting, entitled *Miss Selfie*—participating in PA's The New Feminists issue—is part of her Beauty Pageant series which examines to what measure women's looks are evaluated and judged by the world around them, and why women generally care about their appearance more than men tend to do—and most importantly, what this says about our shared values.

Motivated by her ongoing struggle with women defining themselves and their self-worth in terms of their beauty or lack thereof, Title channels her frustration by examining societal conditioning—in particular, the rivalry promoted by beauty pageants.

Seeking to capture the obvious contradictions, Title finds that these competitions—which value external appearance as the most important quality—both instill confidence and promote a loss of self-worth, and ultimately harm society at large.

The underlying premise of *Miss Selfie*—based on a photograph Title took during a televised pageant broadcast—is the fine line between appearing happy and crazy. Scrutinizing the women's faces, Title asks a lot of probing questions about their true emotions and personal motivations at the time of this event.

Fascinated by the sociocultural and psychological role the selfie plays in today's society, Title questions why, despite international media attention and knowing this moment will be on view on the Internet for a long time, these contestants still feel the urge to take one. Title suspects the selfie not only validates a specific moment in time, but also links it to an unsatisfactory and perhaps deficient inner life—yet, at the same time, keenly aware her painting is similarly seeking public outward validation of a moment captured inside a moment.

See Daena Title's work on her **Website** (<http://daenatitle.com/>).

Written by **Lorena Kloosterboer** (<http://www.art-lorena.com/>), realist artist & author © Antwerp, April 2017

This article is being published in issue #84 THE NEW FEMINISTS.

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YOUR WESTSIDE | YOUR WORLD

Daena Title: From Barbie to Beauty Pageant in a Colorful Palette

Daena Title expresses herself at Koplin Del Rio Gallery, 6031 Washington Blvd in Culver City, October - December 2012

By Amy Sommer | September 26, 2012



When I first spoke to Daena Title in late 2010, it was about a series of oil on canvas paintings and photographs from her "Drown the Dolls" series which showed the iconic doll in various, usually tortuous watery scenarios. The Barbie works made up her first solo exhibition at Culver City's Koplin Del Rio gallery, located at 6031 Washington Blvd in Culver City. As Title said then, "the image of this smiling woman looking happy and pretty in every situation at all costs evokes powerful emotions."

Title's works in the Koplin Del Rio Gallery 30th anniversary group show, "Self-Possessed: Examining Identity in the 21st Century" which runs at the gallery October 27, 2012 – December 8, 2012 focus on another iconic female image: the beauty pageant. When I asked how Title went from Barbie dolls to beauty pageants she said, "... it's a continuation of my obsession with the relationship of women, beauty, role models and how women are valued in our society."

The native New Yorker who has exhibited her work since 1998 and has had solo exhibitions at LA Contemporary, Edgemaer Gallery and throughout the country was also excited to challenge herself artistically while stretching herself professionally. "After the placid Barbies, the idea of capturing these high pitched emotional moments enticed me, and conveying them in high chroma palettes removed from those calm watery worlds I had been working in, was very exciting for me from a formal painting perspective," added the Wellesley graduate whose work is included in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art Online Feminist Art base and is collected by scores throughout the country.

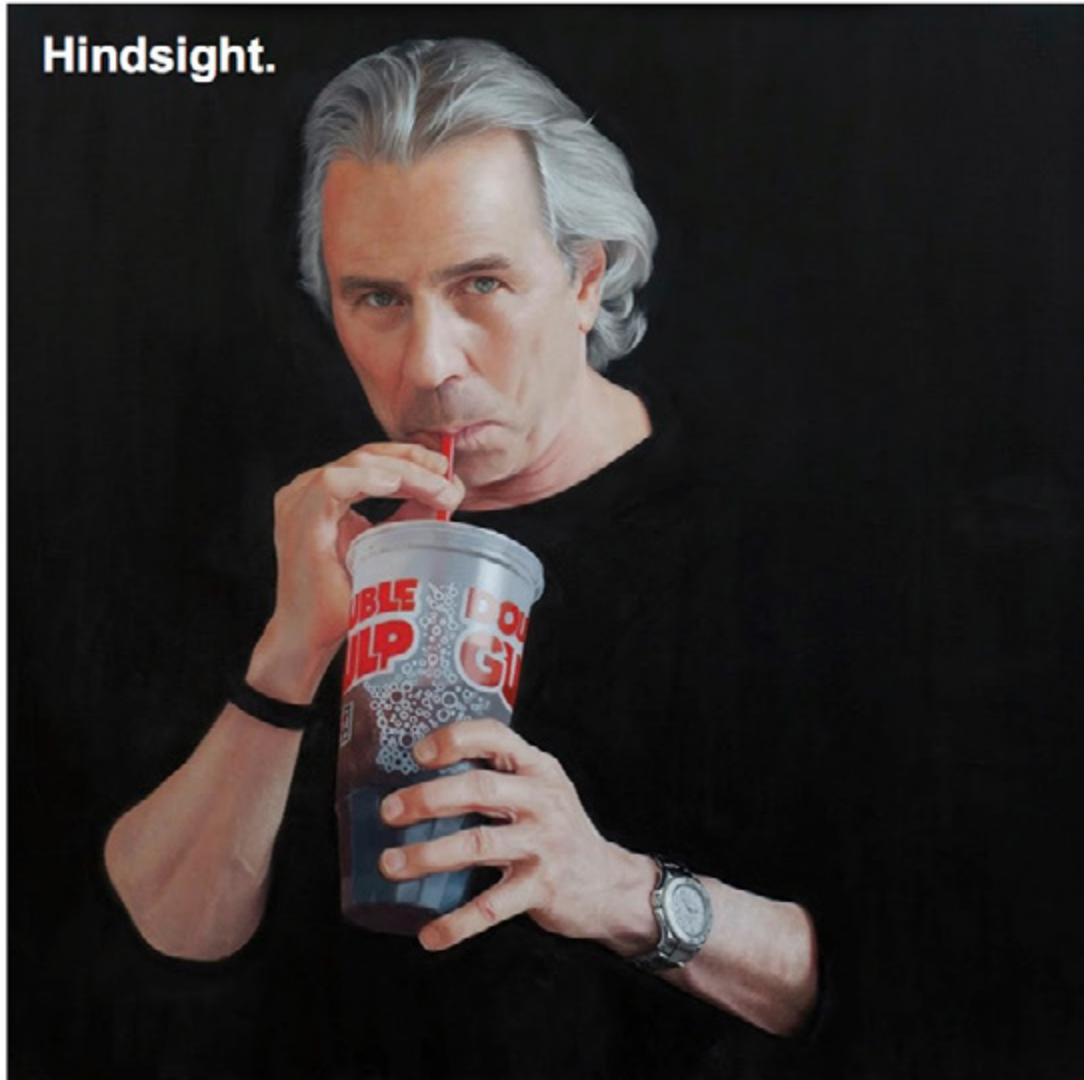
"I love the way the heightened color enhances the heightened emotion," Title concluded when discussing her new work which combin



es passion, technical excellence and about which viewers are likely to be as enthused as the artist herself.

For more information about Title: www.daenatitle.com

For more information about the group show: www.koplindelivr.com



Hindsight.

Showing posts sorted by relevance for query **daena title**. [Sort by date](#) [Show all posts](#)

Tuesday, January 22, 2013

DAENA TITLE: Twenty-Somethings & Tiaras: The Art Of The Beauty Queen

Twenty-Somethings & Tiaras: The Art Of The Beauty Queen

Posted: Jan 10, 2013 11:26 AM CST Updated: Jan 12, 2013 6:24 PM CST

Written by: Lenore Kletter - [bio](#) | [email](#)

Who will be crowned Miss America tonight? LA artist Daena Title will have to watch along with the rest of the world to find out. But one thing she knows for sure. Whoever she is, her mouth will be open. Wide.

Exploring the current fascination with "Toddlers & Tiaras," Title came across the photograph that became "an obsession" and the inspiration for her painting of an exultant twenty-something who has just been declared "Winner!"

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Exploring the current fascination with "Toddlers & Tiaras," Title came across the photograph that became "an obsession" and the inspiration for her painting of an exultant twenty-something who has just been declared "Winner!"

"My first reaction was steeped in the sexual politics" of growing up feminist. "Why is she so happy? What has she accomplished?"

But then it hit her. The sheer "visceral emotion." Title realized "There are few places where a woman can triumph in public" like "the touchdown dance that men do on a football field." She was hooked.

Interestingly Title reveals "the moment of highest emotion" but "no names, no sash IDs," not even which pageant the winner is from. The results? Both individual and universal.

The challenge was to capture "the movement" and "the energy and exuberance" in a work of art "made by hand" with the "human touch" in our digital age. "Which colors and compositions express those emotions?"

The series unfolds in a thrilling natural progression. "That Crowning Moment" is all about anticipation. "You can feel the space between her head and the crown – she's been waiting forever and any second now it's going to actually happen!" Last year's winner "fades away" as she turns over the tiara.

"Fists and Confetti" captures the "moment of anointing." It's as if "the confetti bursts out of her" and the winner practically crows! Title emphasizes the clenched fists. "The drama is that she's about to step out on her own."

Next comes "the moment after." "Point and Stare" basks in the glory of the triumphant runway walk.

With a background in acting, Title is fascinated by the one physical gesture that tells all. From the neck down, the bodies of these young women are uniquely expressive. But what really struck the artist is what all the winners have in common.

That wide open mouth. "In moments of pure joy everybody's face looks the same."

At her latest show at the Koplin Del Rio Gallery in Culver City, Title was insulted when a man called one of her subjects "a bubblehead."

"I've come to respect these ladies and the benefits pageants offer" such as scholarships and skills cultivated by the extensive vetting that takes place off camera. "It's a huge job interview for qualifications like grace under pressure, poise, the ability to represent a company and travel."

But "I'm not convinced pageants are good for the audience. The unintended message that women should put a lot of energy into out-prettying each other to get a prize isn't constructive and doesn't do these gals justice."

Title learned from interviewing contestants that a genuine "sisterhood" lives on beyond the pageants. She herself studied art history at Wellesley College, one of the "Seven Sister" Colleges.

Her father "hated his job" and would "come home and paint to stay sane." He profoundly influenced her passion for art.

So did her face blindness, a condition that made her feel growing up like she was in a "fog of people" whose features she couldn't quite make out. "But the faces in the pictures at the museum were permanent. They were my friends."

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She recalls a friend of her brother's who enlisted in the army after watching the Miss America pageant. "Later he became a Vietnam veteran against the war. " But the power of the pageantry was not lost on her.

Title is married, and the mother of two sons. Her family supports her work. "I think feminism is second nature to them" but she is concerned about the "hook-up culture" and how it will affect the boys' relationships with women.

Title is at work on more paintings in the series. "Art raises a question." The artist's "contribution to society is to become part of the discussion."

Tune in tonight to see the Miss America who is about to be crowned the winner – with her mouth wide open. And then go see Daena Title's art - with your eyes wide open.

Read more: <http://www.myfoxla.com/story/20554324/twenty-somethings-liaras-the-art-of-the-beauty-queen/#ixzz2lkLgNyt8>

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Labels: [ART](#), [DAENA TITLE](#), [TULLMAN COLLECTION](#)

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

NEW ART FOR THE TULLMAN COLLECTION FROM DAENA TITLE

POINT AND SHARE



THE HUFFINGTON POST

ARTS & CULTURE

Neither Painting Nor Disco Is Dead, And Here's The Art Show To Prove It

Don't worry, there will be a disco ball.

🕒 03/14/2016 09:18 am ET

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Priscilla Frank



Arts Writer, The Huffington Post

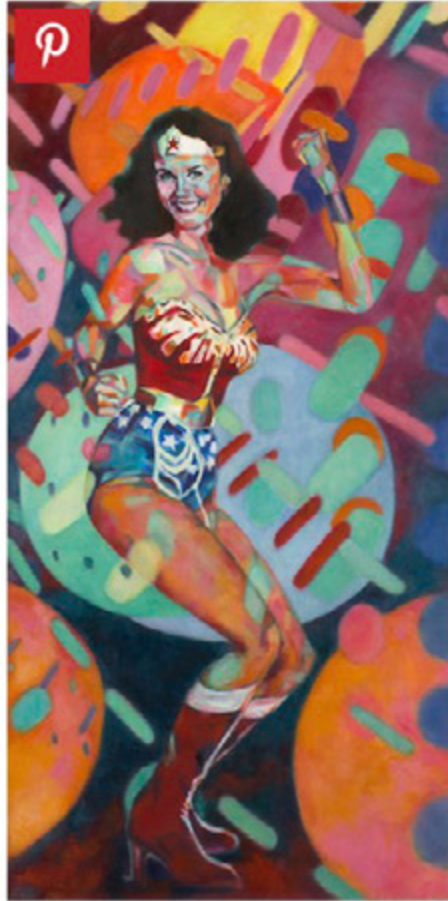


DORIELLE CAIMI, UNREQUITED LIGHTNING, OIL ON CANVAS

"Disco is music for dancing," Italian music producer Giorgio Moroder once said, "and people will always want to dance." Have truer words ever been spoken? Perhaps so, but we can pray for a future in which bell bottoms, mirrored globes and falsetto-laden jams reign over nightlife once again.

To the haters out there who say disco is dead, *and* to the artsy crowd who debates for hours over whether or not [painting has suffered a similar fate](#), stop talking and start ogling the glitter-happy surfaces of "[FREAK OUT!](#)" — a Chicago based exhibition curated by Didi Menendez and Sergio Gomez.

THE HUFFINGTON POST



Daena, Wonder Woman At The Disco, 2016

The show, taking place in a 13,000-square-foot gallery, features artists working in painting, sculpture, photography, video, poetry and performance, all addressing the era long associated with freedom, decadence, glamour, eccentricity and sparkles. In the words of Barry White: "Disco deserved a better name, a beautiful name because it was a beautiful art form. It made the consumer beautiful. The consumer was the star."

In [Sharon Pomales'](#) "High on Life," a mama in booty shorts gets loud on the dance floor of her mind, performing some serious dance domination despite the fact that she seems to be, rather blissfully, alone. [Daniel Maldman's](#) "At The Center Of It All" features a red-headed Bowie doppelgänger donning a skin tight jumpsuit that's an optical illusion in itself, teeming with eyes and fur that shift with kaleidoscopic smoothness.

If you're in the Chicago area, or so hungry to relive your glory days it's worth the trek, head to the [Zhou B Art Center](#) from April 15 to May 14, 2016 to make all your disco dreams come true. And if you don't have disco dreams, you have a lot of thinking to do.

December 14, 2012

HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

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Posted: January 11, 2011 05:25 PM

BIO

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Drown the Dolls: Daena Title at Koplin Del Rio

What's Your Reaction:

Amazing Inspiring Funny Scary Hot Crazy Important Weird

Read More: Barbie, Barbie Art, Barbie Dolls, Barbie Paintings, Daena Title, Koplin Del Rio, Arts News

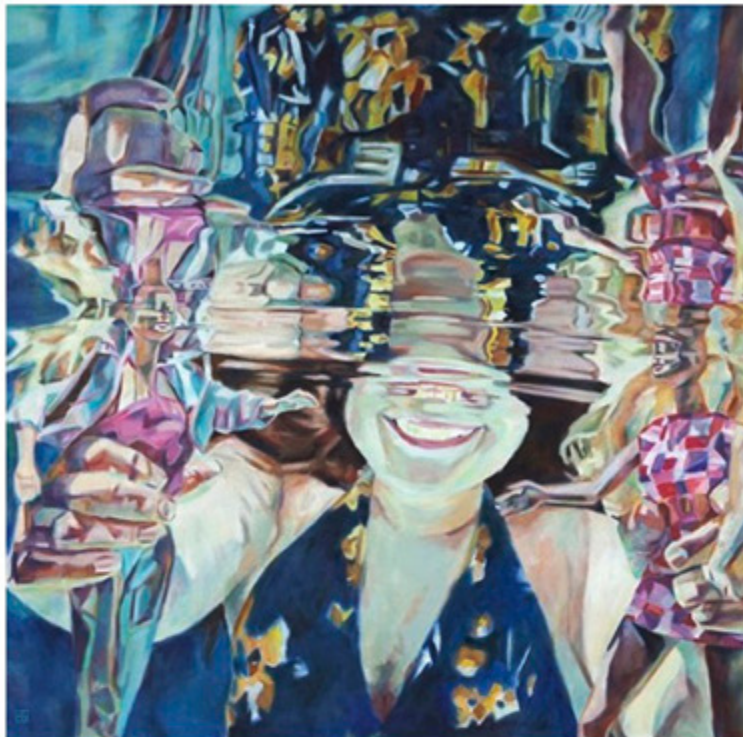
Drown the Dolls: Daena Title at Koplin Del Rio

Barbie's slight but potent form carries five decades of heavy cultural associations on its diminutive shoulders. In her riveting new body of work *Drown the Dolls*, Daena Title mines that iconic ground for fresh and provocative meaning. Barbie's creator Ruth Handler once commented that she "designed Barbie with a blank face, so that the child could project her own dreams" onto the doll -- and Title's Barbies are captivating vehicles for the projection of her trenchant personal vision.



Water Doll by Daena Title (66 x 66")

The paintings in this remarkable series portray the doll in different guises while submerged in the cool blue water of a swimming pool; her various roles include vacant sex symbol, adrift sea goddess, and drowning bride. In *Water Doll*, a golden-maned beauty has an almost spiritual glow as the brilliant sun spotlights her from above. Everything about her and her watery world has a magical, sensuous quality, from the luscious blue-green palette to the rich application of paint. Arms stiffly akimbo, this Barbie is a modern Ophelia, with flowing hair, pneumatic chest and impossibly blue eyes. The rippling water above her acts as a grotesque mirror. In its fractured, upside-down reality, Barbie's smile is an open scream, and her vacant eyes are wide with fear as her troubled id comes to the surface. Society's twisted notions of gender and beauty may idealize this hypersexualized doll-woman, but her distorted reflection undermines any illusions of glossy seduction.



Pool Witch by Daena Title (60 x 60")

Occasionally a young girl joins Barbie in the pool, adding a layer of tantalizing dialogue to the scene. In *Pool Witch*, she floats toward the viewer, a flesh-and-blood antidote to plastic perfection, clutching Barbies in each hand like proud trophies. The girl's and dolls' forms dissolve into a jumbled mosaic on the water's surface above. Their broken, interconnected reflections become a projection of the girl's psyche -- suggesting her open and still unformed identity, and emotional attachment to her Barbies. Below the water's surface, however, the girl's vibrant pubescence is at odds with the dolls' sterile sexuality. Although she's on the cusp of Barbie's adult world, the smiling young swimmer exudes a carefree innocence. This moment is poignant in its evanescence but also exhilarating -- there's a contagious optimism here, from the girl's palpable joy to the vivid colors and dynamic flux of form and reflection. In the end, *Pool Witch* is an exuberant affirmation of feminine power and possibility.

Title lives and works in Los Angeles, and her Barbie paintings are as inviting and refreshing as the suburban pools they're set in. The show runs January 8 through February 16 at L.A.'s [Koplin Del Rio Gallery](#), and offers equal measures of visual delight and intellectual reward.

The artist will talk with writer and critic Peter Frank at Koplin Del Rio Gallery on Feb. 19 (time to be announced).

To view more work: <http://daenatitle.com>

Artist's video commentary: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=drown+the+dolls&aq=f



You are here: [Home](#) / [Ms.cellany](#) / Barbie is Officially Under Water

Barbie is Officially Under Water

January 12, 2011 by [Stephanie Hallett](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

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Surrounded on four walls by paintings, each at least 60' x 60', the sensation of floating just beneath the cool aquamarine surface of a backyard pool is acute. Floating with Barbie, that is.

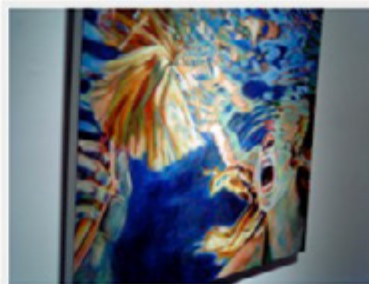
Such was the feeling I had Saturday night on entering [Koplin Del Rio](#) gallery for the opening of "Drown the Dolls," an exhibition of paintings and photographs by Los Angeles-based artist Daena Title. Said Sugar Brown, one of the gallery's owners:

Every woman has a relationship with Barbie. We either loved Barbie, hated Barbie or didn't understand her.

Whatever your relationship to the 52-year-old doll, "Drown the Dolls" will hold some meaning. After a week of [posts](#) and [declarations](#) about [drowning Barbie](#) here on the Ms. Blog, seeing the show up close (in the flesh, so to speak) gave the work real power. Title's skill alone bears admiration, as her renditions of Barbie's distorted face reflected on the pool's surface are familiar and eerily accurate.

Though the exhibition [has garnered critique](#) from Ms. Blog readers and [fellow feminists](#) on account of its title, blogger and scholar Natalie Wilson [decodes the show best](#) when she says,

The reactions thus far of "drowning" as violent focus on the project's title alone, failing to take the content (and context) of the paintings into account—they are not a glorification of violence but a critique of the violence done to girls and women (and their bodies and self-esteem) by what Barbie represents.



It is truly Barbie's contorted reflection on the watery surface of the backyard pool that drives home [what Wilson terms](#) the grotesque abnormality of Barbie's body. In her wobbling reflection, the suffocating ideals of feminine beauty that Barbie represents are revealed for what they truly are—silly, unimportant, impeachable. The subversive power inherent in that act of purposeful distortion resonated in the real-life presence of the work.

But girls everywhere receive Barbie dolls as gifts every single day, and so the conversation must go on. A panel of experts, including Ms. bloggers [Natalie Wilson](#), [Elline Lipkin](#) and [Melanie Klein](#), along with "Drown the Dolls" artist [Daena Title](#) and the first-ever voice of Spanish Barbie, [Marabina Jaimes](#), will share their insights into the Barbie universe at [Koplin Del Rio](#), in Culver City, CA, on January 29 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The event is open to all; join the discussion!

Photos of the exhibition by the author.

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Haiku Reviews: Love, Dolls And Rhinos | Berkely, Los Angeles, Culver City

First Posted: 02-17-11 06:10 PM | Updated: 02-17-11 06:10 PM

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HuffPost Arts' Haiku Reviews is a weekly feature where invited critics review exhibitions and performances in short form. Some will be in the traditional Haiku form of 5x7x5 syllables, others might be a sonnet or a string of words together. This week Rodney Punt, Peter Frank and George Heymont give quick takes on performing and visual art. Is there a show or performance that you think people should know about? Write a Haiku with a link and shine a light on something you think is noteworthy too.

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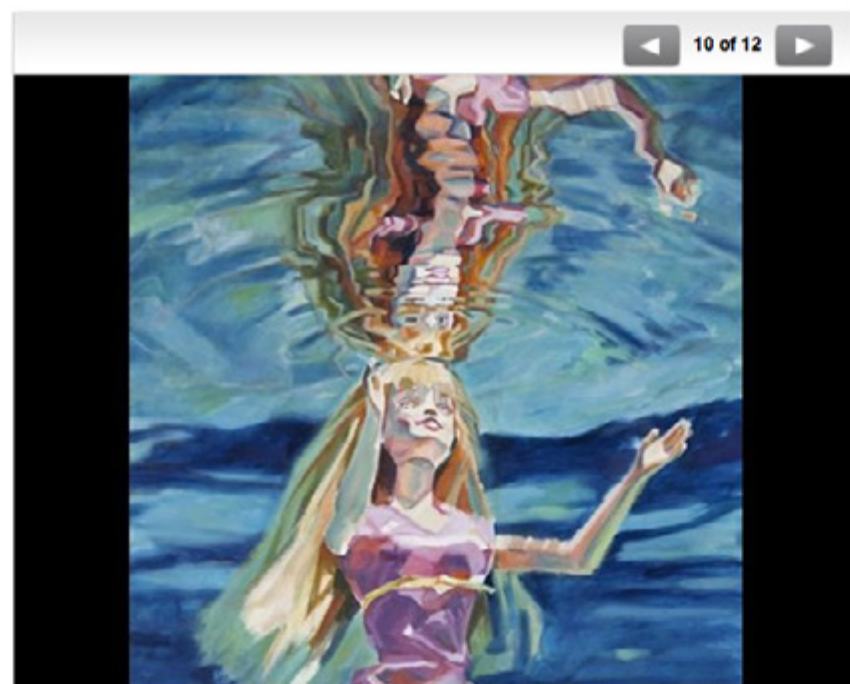


PHOTO CREDIT: DAENA TITLE, *Madonna of the Dolls*, 2008, Oil on canvas, 42 x 42 inches

WHAT: Daena Title

Koplin Del Rio
6031 Washington Blvd.
Culver City, CA
Through February 26

Interview with Peter Frank, February 19, 3 pm

HAIKU REVIEW: Daena Title is a figurative painter whose favored figure may be inanimate but is more famous than most figures. Title's treatment of this un-living living doll has caused no little controversy among various blogospheric neo-anti-feminists, but jeez, can't a gal drown her Barbie dolls, and paint the process, in peace? If Title did this as a YouTube performance she'd doubtless catch less flak; what is it about painting, that antique, noble medium, that its subject matter has to be so august? Title is a skilled painter, sensitive to the rendition of water and cloth and flesh and plastic; her doll-drowning pictures aren't painstakingly naturalistic, but their close-up vantages and complex compositions do dramatize the act. - Peter Frank

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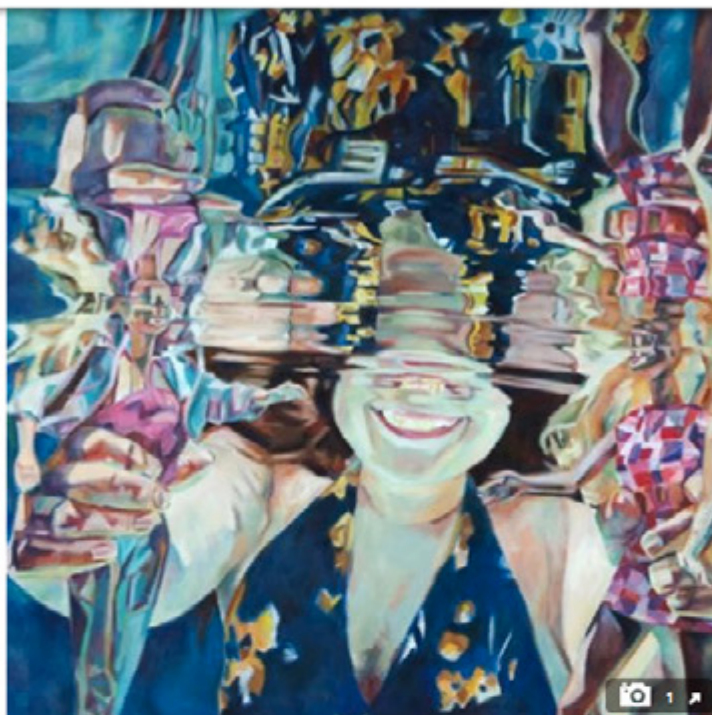
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EVERYTHING'S UP TO DATE IN CULVER CITY!

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2011 AT 4:30 A.M.



This weekend, the art world dons stylish walking shoes and heads for Culver City for the first weekend of what promises to be an explosive year, attempting 20-plus openings in under two hours. Hit the corner of La Cienega and Washington and follow the crowds; or if you prefer having a plan, here are some of the highlights. Mark Moore (formerly of Bergamot) inaugurates fancy new digs with a curated preview of its 2011 program (5790 Washington Blvd.; through Feb. 12; 5-8 p.m.; 310-453-3031). In the dynamic group-show vein, Carmichael mounts a mixed-media dynamo with Boogie and Pascual Sisto (5795 Washington Blvd.; through Feb. 5; 6-8 p.m.; 323-939-0600) and Roberts & Tilton shows off its own stable, featuring Barry McGee, Ed Templeton and Kehinde Wiley (5801 Washington Blvd.; through Feb. 19; 6-8 p.m.; 323-549-0223). Kopeikin offers photos of optimistic retro motel signage from the last four decades by Steve Fitch (2766 La Cienega Blvd.; through Feb. 12; 6-8 p.m.; 310-559-0800). Western Project convenes post-punk and performance-art pioneers Bob Flanagan & Sheree Rose, Kim Jones and Johanna Went (2762 La Cienega Blvd.; through Feb. 5; 6-8 p.m.; 310-838-0609). Angles shows Soo Kim's innovative photo-based cutouts (2754 La Cienega Blvd.; through Feb. 12; 6-8 p.m.; 310-396-5019). It's Lucas Michael's turn at the city's smallest gallery, EGHQ (2600 La Cienega Blvd.; through Jan. 25; 6-8 p.m.; 310-497-6895). Fast-rising star Heather Cantrell continues her portraiture studies at Kinkead (6029 Washington Blvd.; through Feb. 19; 6-9 p.m.; 310-838-7400), while next door, Daena Title's *Drown the Dolls* (pictured) and Joshua Levine's *My Menagerie* at Koplin del Rio give inner children and spirit animals free rein (6031 Washington Blvd.; through Feb. 19; 6-8 p.m., artists' talk 5:30 p.m.; 310-836-9055). All listed galleries are in Culver City; most are open Tues.-Sat. Visit culvercity.org/culture/artgalleries.aspx for a complete list.

Sat., Jan. 8, 2011

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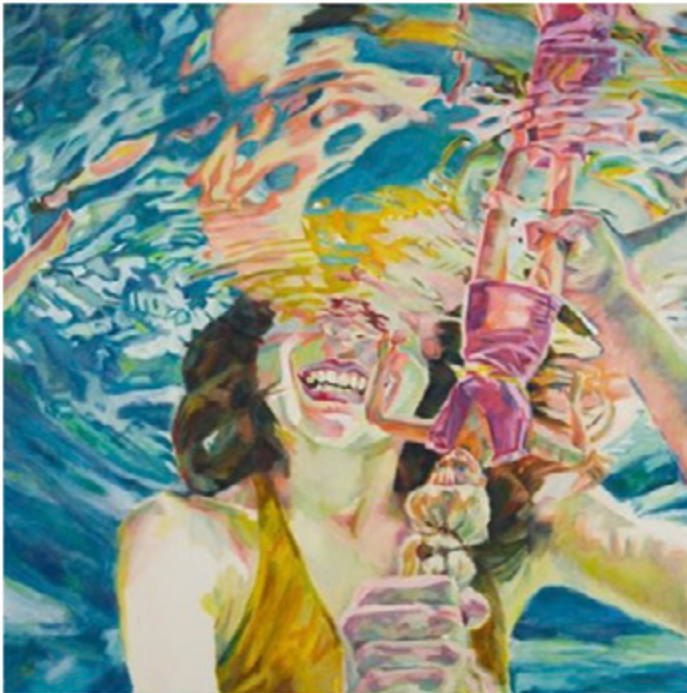
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Artist Drowns Barbie And Paints The 'Crime'

BY INTERN CAROLINE IN ARTS



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Daena Title, *Dirty Fighter*, 2010. Oil on canvas, 48" x 48".

Barbie has inspired art from the likes of Andy Warhol and Karl Lagerfeld, both of whom are lauded for their doll-themed works on the Barbie website. [Painter Daena Title](#) probably won't be added to that list anytime soon. In her latest series, "Drown the Dolls," Barbie is murdered at the hands of anonymous prepubescent girls.

Title spent three years painting Barbie dolls submerged in bright, prismatic swimming pools, but the toy isn't going for a swim. Barbie wears a tight midriff sweater in *Big Doll* (2008) and a puffy-sleeved ball gown in *You're Worrying About the Wrong Thing* (2009), reminding the viewer that she's nothing like her swimsuit-clad "tormentors." The girls' grinning mouths and bared teeth force the viewer to reflect not only on Barbie's influence on girls' body images, but also on how women interact with one another. Is a Barbie doll a friend, frenemy, archrival, or something else entirely?

I interviewed Title about “Drown the Dolls,” her thoughts on Barbie, and her next series. To check out more of her work, visit [her website](#) or check out [Koplin del Rio](#), her gallery in Los Angeles.



Daena Title, *You're Worrying About the Wrong Thing*, 2009. Oil on canvas, 48" x 60".

Where did the inspiration come from for the “Drown the Dolls” series?

There was a wildfire here in Los Angeles, and there was this amazing photograph of one of the burnt houses with a dead bunny floating in the backyard pool. It was so eerie, horrible, and deeply moving. I didn't totally understand the multilayered meaning that this would have for me. I just knew I had to do it. I wanted to do something under water – I loved the idea because it allows you to work realistically, representationally, and also abstractly. When I hit upon the Barbie idea, I was immediately obsessed. When I started painting the series, it took the third painting for me to realize I wasn't painting a person, but a still life. I thought in my own mind that I was painting a person, a portrait.

Could these paintings have worked with another toy or symbol? What about a brunette Barbie?

I think not. There was just one Barbie when I was growing up. To me, I think of the Barbie that I didn't play with, but that some of my friends did. A brunette wouldn't be as loaded as a blonde one. In Mattel's defense, they've made an effort. They've given her careers. This is all laudable. What's so disturbing to me is the sense that yes, you can have a career, but only if you spend enough time to look like her, spend time on your wardrobe, only then is it acceptable. When Barbie first came out, the only dolls around were Babies...Barbie was incredibly cool. She was a teacher, a stewardess. She had a home in Malibu, she had a boyfriend. She was an independent figure that teens and younger girls could look up to. Being a mom wasn't their only choice in life. So actually, it served a pretty feminist function. But it simultaneously became this yardstick for beauty. That was the other message. Your feet should always be ready for high heels. That's where your energy should go.

Last year, these paintings sparked some criticism from feminist bloggers who pointed to violence against women in the works. Can you comment on this?

I was shocked by their reactions. I can't control what people feel when they look at an image. I can only speak to what I felt. I think it's inarguable that images with girls drowning Barbie dolls are images of empowerment and not violence against women. The image of Barbie as an example of how women are supposed to be in society, a reflection of that ideal of beauty, is extraordinarily suffocating. I see myself as a Barbie if I enact that image fully and take on those societal expectations. Then I feel submerged, that I cannot exist. So that's what I get from these images. I do want personally to drown the Barbies to stamp out what society expects from little girls. There is a violence you could bring to that, but it's not against these women, it's against those who would entrap or suffocate women with this image.

What is the modern Barbie promoting? Having it all? What kind of power does Barbie still wield?

One of the things I learned from this show is that people love Barbie. One reason is because it allows them an enormous opportunity for creative play, which is very empowering. Others say all it teaches is that dressing up and buying accessories is important...Most of the women I spoke to who had Barbies tortured them. I don't quite know what that was about, these anecdotal stories of people being very antagonistic toward Barbie and her look. If you spend all of your energy trying to look like a Barbie, that's so much of your energy that isn't oxygenated. Men spend less energy worrying about all the things women have to worry about to be attractive in this society. So much time on makeup, hair, nails, and accessories. Barbie dolls represent all of this to me...You can't blame the Barbie doll for everything, but I think it is typical for the American culture. And I'm happy to see it drown.

I read that you're currently working on "Pageants!" a series of paintings depicting real-life women in the moments after they win beauty pageants. This seems like a natural progression to me, from painting Barbie dolls to real-life Barbies.

Some would say that. Some women have stories and reasons to be peddling on their beauty. And some grew up with Barbie dolls. Each one has a story, and I hope to explore them. It's not just that they're Barbie dolls. These are real people with real stories who are trying to get somewhere, and this is what they're using to do it...Society is allowing them an opportunity to get a reward and be judged for being beautiful, as opposed to what men are judged on, which is accomplishments. I think that's the issue.

By [Grace Duggan](#) for *BUST*

All photos courtesy [Daena Title](#)

Tags: [barbie](#) , [Daena Title](#) , [Drown the Dolls](#)

jan anders nelson

ARTIST INTERRUPTED

Drowning Barbie, Beauty Queens and Wonder Woman. An Interview with artist Daena Title

Posted on [April 8, 2017](#)



— Stockholm Syndrome, Daena Title

This is a blog post that is way overdue. I met Daena on Facebook in the Fall of 2016 in a group managed by poet, publisher and curator [Didi Menendez](#). Didi was looking at new ways to get those of us in this space to engage with each other and tossed out a challenge of artists interviewing each other. A number of us raised our virtual hands, volunteering, which led Didi to assign Daena and me to each other.

We traded contact information and several emails where we laid out a framework of thoughts to guide us. Daena suggested a Skype video call with an idea that recording that call would be an interesting method of conducting a joint interview. And we did that. Sort of. While not recording, we had an initial videoconference and talked for a long time. Neither of us was happy with the video quality and decided that while the idea is still worth pursuing, that for the “assignment” given to us by Didi, we’d write up a more typical interview post.

Five months later, I am sitting down to write up that video call, along with the email conversations we had leading up to it.

JN: I see very strong feminist imagery in your work. Tell me where that comes from.

DT: it’s not that I pick Feminist issues and paint them, it’s that I get obsessed with something (perhaps a photograph or the idea of painting underwater reflections) and then 4 paintings in I look at them and go, “Oh. I get it. That’s...” and inevitably it’s some Feminist diatribe.

I have been an ardent Feminist since I gave up cheerleading in 1972, and I guess it just permeates my soul and there’s no escaping it.

JN: How did you get here? I see that you were very active in theatre early on.

DT: It’s a checkered past. From theater, to screenplay writing. It wasn’t until I weaned my first son that I wanted to return to art, which I’d loved pre-college.

I see that my art is semi-narrative and dramatic at times, but otherwise don’t see much of a connection to theater days. Theater was so social and collaborative. Things I was happy to trade away for quiet time alone in my studio. How about you?

JN: Checkered is a good term! I also have a theater background, and share your viewpoint that the time in the studio is a good trade-off. I talk about my evolution from theatre to the studio in [this blog post](#).



— Big Doll, Daena Title

DT: I recently survived a bout with breast cancer, and I find that's moving me down a new, as yet unclear, path. Funny that, two moments where my art is being launched, and both tied to my breasts. Hah! How essentially female of me.

JN: Ah yes, you mentioned the birth of your first son as a catalyst to returning to art after a long hiatus. Congratulations on being a survivor! My wife, Connie, is also among your ranks. What can you tell us about the shift that is happening for you?

DT: Yes. It's a plague. I'm sorry to hear that. For the art, my hope is to be less didactic and more joyful. I've come to the conclusion that the way to contribute as an artist is to bring joy to others.

I loved that old saying from the movie tycoon (Samuel Goldwyn) in the 40's, "If I wanted to send a message, I'd call Western Union". As if anyone even knows what Western Union is today. But hope I can be less didactic somehow in future. I love my Beauty Queens, but I'd love to paint animals for example.

JN: Well, your palette sure imparts emotional feeling, I think you experience your own joy in working with color. I am reminded of the Fauvists. Tell me about that.

DT: Totally devoted to color, yup, and obviously grew up on the Fauvists and Der Blaue Reiter and early Kandinsky. I just don't understand neutral colored art. But a high chroma surrounded by neutral support, that's a piece of heaven that I would love to explore more.

I remember seeing Matisse's portrait of his wife at MOMA as a child and saying— Oh gosh—that's how I see. A shock of recognition.



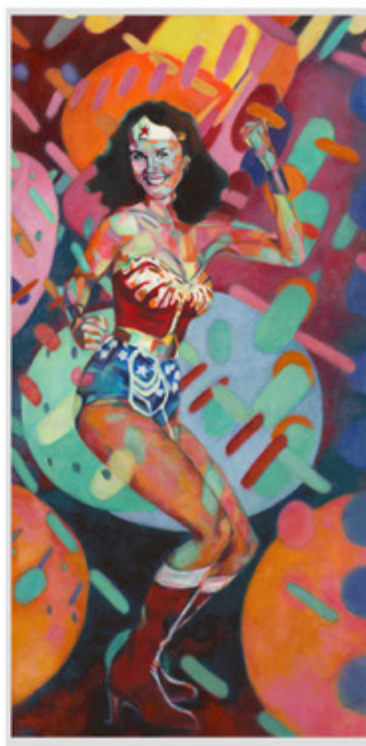
— The Green Line, Matisse, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen

JN: For years, B&W best expressed my responses to the world. I am not sure why that was, what the drivers were for it. Today, color is more interesting to me and is increasing as a part of my vocabulary, though when I look into most of my imagery, it seems that the palettes are pretty subdued. I wonder if there is a connection between that and my earlier preference or self-selection of working in B&W? It seems that we have a different way of seeing the world of color.

DT: I will sometimes use black or white as a color, but rarely use black to create a value scale. And often, not white. Also, I usually paint with a full spectrum palette.

JN: Let's talk a bit about process. I plan ahead, doing compositional work in the prep stage with my cameras. I think the discipline was developed by the relatively high cost of film and dark room time. Getting everything right before releasing the shutter was critically important to me, and even now with wonderful digital cameras, this process persists. I am very deliberate. The process of painting or drawing also has parallels with my photography, the works start to emerge like a photograph in the developer tray in a dark room, layers and time bring them to the point where I feel they are complete. Tell me about your process.

DT: I am more impatient and improvisational. Like you I plan out most of the composition ahead of time, but do not set the values or color. Those are discovered as I work. The painting tells me where it needs to go. It is more a path of happy (or unhappy) accident and discovery. In fact, I often put in too much, and then have to eliminate and simplify.



— Wonder Woman at the Disco, Daena Title

JN: So we could say that I see in patterns of value, and you see in color.

DT: Absolutely. If you look at, for example, at the torso of "Great Britain", you can see that it's not so much a study in value as in color. In places, the only thing that creates the form is the use of warm vs cool, rather than a grey scale of value.



— Great Britain, Daena Title

I'm also experimenting with a more indirect form of painting. Underpainting, planning values and layering. Interested in seeing if the use of under painted layers will add to my conversation or hurt it.

JN: I recently completed a studio space that frees me to change my processes from working one-at-a-time to doing a series of works simultaneously, as well as the potential for increasing

the scale of individual works. Being able to move between pieces as drying times dictate is something I've not had the liberty to explore. How that added capacity adds to or changes my processes will remain to be seen. What about you?

DT: I am trying to work on more than one piece at a time, but inevitably I end up obsessing about one of them until it's first draft is done. It's a battle because I'm very impatient and I hate waiting for paint to dry, even when I know I should. OCD?

JN: I guess we'll learn a lot by trying these experiments!

DT: Your work in the cannery series is very Charles Demuth/Precisionists. Are you drawn to their work? Whose work do you admire?

JN: In fact, I co-curated a show with fellow artist and friend [Allan Gorman](#) for the [Nichole Longnecker Gallery](#) in Houston that ran from February 27th through April 1st, 2017 called "[Industrialism in the 21st Century](#)" where works from this series were on display alongside works of 9 other artists. Demuth, Sheeler, O'Keefe... all influences, more for their representational painting during a time when Abstract Expressionism ruled than for the specific subject matter, though grain silos and similar imagery resonated for me as a young artist living in rural Nebraska.



— Pressure #1, Jan Anders Nelson

Daena: YEEEESSSS! Love these guys. I'm drawn to their fracturing, almost cubist work. I was recently working on trying to add a temporal element to Precisionism. As well as apply it to Figure painting as seen in my painting "It's all a Blur"



— It's all a Blur, Daena Title

Emotional Cubism as Compositional Collage via Precisionism's fracturing of space:

In "It's All A Blur", I continue my experimentation with Compositional Collage, here adding a Temporal Component to my form of Precisionism. I'm trying to capture what I've been thinking of as "Emotional Cubism", that is, instead of showing an object from all sides, showing an emotional event from all sides and through a moment in time. My hope is to convey the inexact way our brains and souls register and remember a highly charged event.

JN: I love how we have these threads of commonality, with visual imagery that is so very different.

Daena: Though we land at different paces on the scale, both of us have similar challenges:

When is a painting done? When is there too much detail? When is too much said? What should be left out?

JN: Indeed. Though my drawing and painting have strong photographic references, I work to reduce the imagery to become only those details that I find essential. Determining what not to paint is a part of it.

Daena: Also interesting that you mentioned living in Nebraska. I'm wondering what the light is like there. Never been. I grew up in NY. Lots of blue light and very yellow-green trees. But I've spent the last 30 years in LA. Flat yellow light and blue green trees and dusty chaparral. Really ugly. To me anyway. Do you find where you're living effects what you're making? Or do you just carry your art inside you? I find the earlier influences seem to be more important than where I am now. So no Georgia O'Keefe shift for me. It reminds me of what you said earlier, that in some ways your art is memory. How the shifts from the past and the now blend, how that synthesis affects the aesthetic.

JN: Yes, I think the light does make a difference. The intensity of the midday Sun over the Great Plains is very different from the "Bluest skies you'll ever see" here in the Pacific Northwest. As I write this, it is raining outside in a typically Washington Spring sort of way.

John Salt said this about light in the United States: "...the light is much sharper, you get incredibly clear light, much harder, it's much softer in Britain, it doesn't quite have that edge – edge in every way, in light and subject matter."

I do not think John spent any time in this part of the world, but his words resonate with my time in the Midwest. "Chev" is a slide I shot in the mid 70s while living in Nebraska and (I think) captures that intensity.



— Photoshop mockup for a painting "Chev", a part of the series "Dirty Picture Show", Jan Anders Nelson

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Daena: Did I tell you that I remember David Hockney was quoted about that. He said as a boy in England he saw pictures or movies of America and he couldn't believe how sharp the shadows were. I love that story because we take that for granted here, and also because it shows that he was destined to be an artist if he noticed those sorts of things as a child.

JN: I wonder if introversion might also play a role in how we observe and note the world around us as figurative artists. I think that is true in my case.

Daena, thanks so much for taking the time to tell me about your life and work, and for your patience in waiting for me to follow-through and write our conversations up. Recently you told me that our dialog had some value for you, both in process and clarifying your viewpoint.

Daena: I arranged a monitor in my studio, not as large as yours, but sizable, to work from and am so happy! Also, I have found that our conversation was deeply helpful to me. Delving into your process helped me understand my own with new and greater clarity. I realized, for me, it wasn't a weakness, as I believe I was harboring the notion of on some level, that I didn't plan out my values and colors ahead of time. Rather, the journey of discovery is where my strength lies. Seeing how beautifully well it worked for you, made me understand it could never work for me. Funny that.



- Working on "Pressure #1" for "Industrialism in the 21st Century", an exhibit at the Nicole Longnecker Gallery, Houston Texas, 2017, Jan Anders Nelson Studio



— Jan Anders Nelson Studio

JN: Ah yes! The monitor is such a great tool for me. With the advent of 4K televisions, the key issue for me was building a little studio computer that would drive that resolution and then finding a deal on a 52" screen and rolling cart to hold them.

I am thrilled that our conversations have played a role in your thinking about your approach and am really looking forward to seeing what comes out of your studio and in continuing our conversations. And thank you Didi for making us talk to each other!

<http://daenatitle.com>

Bio:

Raised on Long Island, lifelong Feminist Daena Title received a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Theatre Studies from Wellesley College, and then lived in Manhattan until 1991 where she worked as an actress and a writer. Title then returned to painting as the best avenue with which to control her artistic message, mine her ongoing fascination/obsession with the relationship between women and society, and indulge her love of color and design. Her work, which focuses on the powerfully seductive force of modern female icons, has been shown in gallery and museum spaces since 1998, including recent group exhibitions at the Carnegie Art Museum, the Long Beach Art Museum, The Oceanside Museum, the Riverside Museum, the Torrance Art Museum and the LA Art Fair. Title has received critical praise for past solo exhibitions from the Los Angeles Times, the LA Weekly, and the Huffington Post among other publications and is proud that her work has been featured in several PoetsArtists shows and publications, is part of the Brooklyn Museum Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art Online Feminist Art base and the Tullman Collection of Chicago. Title currently resides and works in Los Angeles.

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Freak OUT!! Daena Title

FREAK OUT, FREAK OUT!! EXHIBITION, HOWARD TULLMAN, POETSARTISTS, PRESS

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Feminist painter Daena Title's colorist, expressionist work centers on her obsession with the seductive force of modern female icons. Her work explores the on-going love/hate relationship between women, societal standards, and self-esteem as well as Title's fascination with the line between beauty and distortion, both in formal and narrative terms.

Raised on Long Island, Daena Title received a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Theatre Studies from Wellesley College, and then lived in Manhattan until 1991 where she worked as an actress and a writer. Title then returned to painting as the best avenue with which to control her artistic message, mine her ongoing fascination and obsession with the relationship between women and society, and indulge her love of color and design. Her work of modern female icons, has been shown in gallery and museum spaces since 1998, including recent group exhibitions at the Carnegie Art Museum, the Long Beach Art Museum, The Oceanside Museum, the Riverside Museum, the Torrance Art Museum and the Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, and the Zhou B Art Center in Chicago. She has received critical praise for past solo exhibitions from the *Los Angeles Times*, the *LA Weekly*, and *Huffington Post* among other publications and is proud that her work is part of the Brooklyn Museum's On Line Feminist Art Base and the Tullman Collection in Chicago.

Wonder Woman at the Disco | Mixed media on canvas: oil, acrylic, pastel | 48X24 inches
| 2016

From '1975 -79 as Disco reigned, America tried to absorb what "Feminism" meant. The "Wonder Woman" TV series, starring Lynda Carter, former Miss Tennessee and then Miss World America 1972, evidently tried its best to bring us a symbol of female empowerment but as usual it was co-mingled with buxom woman as sex object.

Do you remember the 1970's and if so what are three highlights of that time frame for you?

And how. We'd just recuperated from three major assassinations, got out of Vietnam, and with Watergate had as a nation lost all faith in our politicians—the cultural culmination for all this turbulence? Disco!



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For me it was the dancing: I was in college during those disco years, '75- '79. "Freak Out" blared at the Frat parties. In NYC, I did the Hustle at the Copacabana, as in "music and passion are always in fashion at the —". And my parents told stories of wild parties out on Fire Island where everyone did "The Bump", this being that innocent time just before AIDS rampaged through that exquisite gay enclave.

Tell us about the artwork you are submitting for the exhibition.

The rise of Disco dovetailed with the popularization of Feminism. TV-land didn't know what to do with themselves on the subject. So in the "Wonder Woman" series we had a mix of female power and female exploitation. Airing from 1975 -1979, it coincided exactly with the disco years of mid to late 70's.

And, coincidentally, it's titular star, Lynda Carter, was crowned Miss Tennessee and then Miss World America in 1972.

Do you listen to music while you work?

Sometimes in the early stages I need silence. After a painting's initial structure is set, I either listen to one of the various stations I've created on Pandora, or a single CD that changes painting to painting and that I play obsessively again and again while working. With "Wonder Woman at the Disco", it was the great Paolo Nutini's "These Streets", for no particular reason.

Have you experienced a eureka moment while working on the artwork for Freak Out?

Yes! I had so much fun doing an "assignment". I've always avoided commission work, but finding a way into this show's theme was the opposite of what I expected. Rather than constricting it was freeing, and with that came much joy.

I also worked with some new paint colors for the first time: Sennelier's Neutral Tint and Gamblin's Ultramarine Violet and loved them; recommend them! Especially fun with Gamblin's Phthalo Emerald, various Naphthol Reds and Radiant Magenta.

Tell us about your current series.

Two things: Subject wise, I'm still fascinated by modern female icons. Lately I have been painting Beauty Pageant winners caught at their highest emotional moments.

But also, formally in some of my work (not the piece for this show), I've been attempting what I call Emotional or Temporal Cubism. Cubism, we know, shows an object from all sides at once. I am trying to do the same for an emotional event. I want to find a way to mirror the act of how we both process and remember moments of high emotion. We register parts but not all of what happens and I've been attempting a kind of Compositional Collage that can express that visually.

DIDI MENENDEZ

Interview, Original Artwork, Large Paintings



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PA#77 Chévere

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OCT
24

Chevere: Daena Title

I was going for Joy. And Celebration. How "Chevere" to see a Supreme Court Judge cutting loose and dancing at a disco. But during the time I have been working on this painting, Donald Trump has changed the environment for Latinos in this country. He has insulted a Latino judge saying he was incapable, by the very fact of being of Latino heritage, of doing his job. He has told us the kind of people he would nominate to the Court. I don't think Justice Sotomayor would be on that list.

So what was initially a dance of joy may now be a dance while you can—or, depending on the results on November 8, a dance of triumph and relief.

For me, for now, it is still a dance of joy—a Latino woman on the Supreme Court—that is something to dance about.

— Daena Title



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Q&A

If you could describe your life (or career) (or personality) with a movie title, what would it be?

Career: To Have and Have Not

Personality: Truly, Madly, Deeply

You get one chance to go back to your childhood for a day, what day would it be?

I think I would pick the day my late father took me to see the collection at the old MOMA, the one that had "Guernica" in the stairwell, for the first time; I think I was 9? And I'd experience all those paintings for the first time, and hear him again trying to convey his passion for them to me as he guided me through that astonishing new world that he loved so much.

Is there a color you dislike so much you won't use it?

Funny, one of my early teachers told me to not use white, black or brown. She said I should mix my own colors to create browns and black, and that I shouldn't rely on mixing in white or black for value but lean instead on color choice. These days, thankfully, I use more white, but I don't tend to use earth colors, burnt sienna or the umbers. That's no secret looking at my work which is very Cadmium, Thalo chromatic. I even have to remind myself, usually in the last stages of a painting, that Yellow Ochre exists, as I am so drawn to the brighter yellows. And black, oh black, is always a choice rather than an impulse.

How many times have you ventured outside of your comfort zone?

Too few! Too few! I will try again today. And tomorrow.

Who would you like to have sit for you for a portrait?

Steve Martin, that is, if he's in a talkative mood.

If you were sent to space to paint or write, which three books would you take with you?

I would die in space where there is no color, and no book could fill the gap. Please don't send me there.



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Sotomayor at the Disco | oil on canvas | 48 x 24 inches | 2016



PA#77 Chêvere

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This is issue #77 which features the works in Chêvere showing at Sirona Fine Art Gallery December 3, 2016. Visit Sirona's [Artsy](#) page for further information.



PA 61 curated by Victoria Selbach

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BIO

Feminist painter Daena Title's colorist, expressionist work centers on her obsession with the seductive force of modern female icons. Her work has been shown in gallery and museum spaces since 1998, including recent group exhibitions at the Carnegie Art Museum, the Long Beach Art Museum, The Oceanside Museum, the Riverside Museum, the Torrance Art Museum, as well as Koplin del Rio and Gallery 825 in Los Angeles. Her next solo show will be at the Carter Burden Gallery in Chelsea, Manhattan in September of 2017. Title has received critical praise for past solo exhibitions from the Los Angeles Times, the LA Weekly, and the Huffington Post, and was included in the Post's recent article about the Zhou B Art Center group show "Freak Out!", *"Neither Painting Nor Disco is Dead and Here's the Art to Prove It"*. Title is proud that her work is part of the Brooklyn Museum Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art Online Feminist Art base and the Tullman Collection. See more of Title's work or join her mailing list at daenatitle.com. You can also follow her as Daena Title Artist on Facebook.



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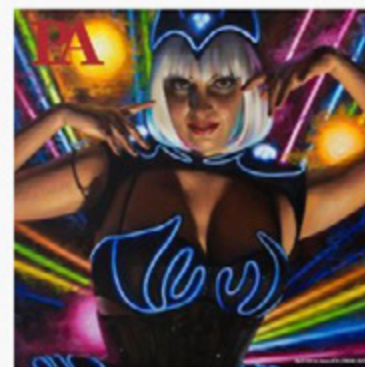


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Zhou B Art Center, Chicago, April 15, 2016

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- 8** Stephanie Hallett, “Barbie is Officially Under Water,” Ms. Magazine Blog, Jan 12, 2011
- 9** Peter Frank, “Haiku Review: Love, Dolls, and Rhinos” Huffington Post, Jun 17, 2011
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- 11** Grace Duggan, “Artist Drowns Barbie then Paints the ‘Crime” BUST Magazine, Mar 2, 2012
- 12** Jan Anders Nelson, “Drowning Barbies, Beauty Queens and Wonder Woman. An Interview with artist Daena Title” Artist Interrupted, Apr 8, 2017.
- 13** Didi Menendez, “Freak Out,” PoetsArtists Magazine, Apr, 2016.
- 14** Didi Menendez, “Chevére: Daena Title,” PoetsArtists Magazine, Oct 24, 2016.