

ARTFORUM

Holly Andres

01.28.09

DNJ Gallery

12.20.08-02.14.09

Author: Micol Hebron

Holly Andres's first solo exhibition at this gallery features fifteen large LightJet prints distinguished by their luscious palette and meticulous mise-en-scènes. The images recall an unlikely combination of sources, such as Sofia Coppola, Gregory Crewdson, and Nancy Drew, and depict a quartet of girls—perhaps cousins, sisters, or BFFs—making extraordinary discoveries within a middle-class suburban home. Andres's scenes conjure plotlines and allegories from familiar fairy tales and proverbs, but they are unsentimental and not excessive in their girlishness. The protagonists appear simultaneously charming and empowered as they mischievously explore the confines of a home that is fraught with Freudian connotations. The girls peer and pry into many yonic talismans from daily life that represent the precipice of womanhood: a red purse, a sliced-open pillow, a birdcage, a locket, and a keyhole. In *The Glowing Drawer*, 2008, a girl kneels before an open drawer that emanates light from within as two other girls watch nervously in the foreground. In *Secret Portal*, 2008, three of the girls venture like Alice into two secret doorways in a hallway. The scenes are rich with the pleasure and discovery that characterizes adolescent life, when so many small things have profound and often personal significance. Andres's pictures offer a delightfully puckish complement to the patriarchal precedents of constructed narrative tableaux and are elegant successors to the feminist works of Pictorialist foremothers such as Gertrude Käsebier.



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