

Kate Manheim
Curated By John Zorn

December 4, 2008 – January 24, 2009

Opening Reception Thursday, December 4, 6:00 - 8:00pm

“Kate Manheim is one of the universe's most beautiful and mysterious secrets. A prolific artist of incredible energy and power, her photography, acting, writing and artwork are honest, intense, cathartic and unique in all the world.”

-John Zorn



*Totem Loki #3-A-#a-New-A-b***(3), May 2004*
Archival digital print
21" x 21"
Edition of 3

Famous for her work with Richard Foreman’s Ontological-Hysteric Theatre in the 1980’s, Kate Manheim’s artwork explores many of the theoretical concepts, dualities and the blurry lines in between that she first embodied in her on-stage characters. Even when discussing meaning in her work, Manheim resists singular classification, stating [this is] “what you get when you cross an exhibitionist with a recluse.” Pulling from the traditional and the avant garde, the sacred and the profane, the work serves as a testament to the underlying struggles and polarization experienced within one’s own psyche. Touching on one of the most basic human concepts, her paintings, drawings and digital collages give rise to something beautiful and contemplative through the dark and primeval. Much like an actress, the same templates are re-used and permuted, with each work exploring a different take on the revelation of the human condition.

Using famous images from art history and pairing them with intricate patterns and digital manipulation, Manheim’s *Totem Loki* (top, left) are amalgams of a myriad of aesthetic elements that result in the creation of something straight out of the subconscious. The outcome resembles forms that imitate prehistoric, Mayan, cabalistic and humanoid references, embodying the notion of a “totem.” The word “Loki,” first used by the artist’s husband, Richard Foreman, refers to the mythical Norse God, known for changing his appearance and gender. Manheim describes them as what it would look like “if you cut people open and [find] kaleidoscopes inside.” Through the ordered chaos of the solid, stable lines and ever-changing patterns within them, a spiritual contemplation comes to the surface, evoking feelings of confusion, excitement, even fear as the eye travels across the paper. Manheim’s photographs use another template – the artist herself. Spanning multiple decades, they cover an immense range of emotional states of being, incorporating different makeup, poses and costumes, but all underline the brilliant intensity of their subject. Many also reference art history, as in *Headshotbrightbluesky* (right); the semi-urban backdrop of the half-portrait recalls Italian portraits of the Renaissance. Yet, as in all of Manheim’s work, the viewer is left with a sense that some sort of self-discovery has transpired, but it is left to their own devices to decide exactly what that would be.



Headshotbrightbluesky, 1978
Self portrait
Color photograph
Edition of 3

On view at CUE Art Foundation, Manheim’s first solo show in New York City, will be over 100 of her *Totem Loki*, her series of *VD* prints which consist of famous historical depictions of the Virgin Mother collaged with elegantly drawn diagrams of diseased female genitalia, a collection of her self-portraits and examples of the artist’s drawings, spanning from childhood to present-day. All come together to reveal the intricate and sophisticated musings on that which lies just below the surface of the human mind.

(More, over)

For additional information, please contact Ryan Thomas, Programs Assistant, CUE Art Foundation, 212-206-3583, or email ryan.thomas@cueartfoundation.org

ARTIST'S BIO:

Kate Manheim hails from a diverse background of academic study and theatre. The daughter of famous translator Ralph Manheim, she received a classical education at the Sorbonne in Paris, specializing in History of the Medieval Ages and Chinese language. Turning her sights towards the acting world, Kate became one of the leading actresses in Richard Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theatre in Paris and New York City. In 1983, she was a lead performer in the stagings of Heiner Muller's work by Jean Jourdheil and Jean-Francois Peyret at the Petit Odeon in Paris. In 1987 she retired from acting and was admitted to Cooper Union in New York City to pursue her passion for art. Since attending Cooper Union, Kate Manheim has been evolving her complex computer-based imagery, creating over 600 paintings, in them calling attention to the mystery of inspiration. In May and June of 1996, Manheim exhibited a lifetime's work of artwork from childhood paintings of Christ to the "grief portraits" of her mother who died in 1985 at Anthology Film Archive, New York, NY. Manheim's exhibition at CUE marks her first solo show in New York City.

About CUE:

CUE Art Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit forum for contemporary art and cultural exchange that provides opportunities and resources for under-recognized artists. We value the astonishing diversity of creativity that artists provide and the importance of their activity in the social context of the city.

CUE provides artists, students, scholars and art professionals resources at many stages of their careers and creative lives. Our programs include exhibitions, studio residencies, publications, professional development seminars, educational outreach, symposia, readings, concerts and performances. Since 2002, we have operated from our 4,500 square foot storefront venue in the heart of New York's Chelsea Arts District.

CUE exhibiting artists are chosen by their peers and a rotating group of advisors and curators from across the country. This pluralistic process ensures that CUE consistently offers diverse viewpoints from multiple disciplines of artistic practice.

Simply put, we give artists their CUE to take center stage in the challenging world of art.

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