

# Quality Pictures<sup>CA</sup> CONTEMPORARY ART

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## ELIZABETH HUEY - CHRONOPHOBIA

Portland, OR, June 5, 2007 - Quality Pictures is proud to present *Chronophobia*, a solo exhibition of paintings by Elizabeth Huey that mark her Northwest US debut. The exhibition opens June 7 and runs through July 28, 2007. Ms. Huey will be present at the June 7 opening.

*Chronophobia* is the latest installment of work that in part stems from her investigations into the causes and conditions of mental illness and the history of its treatment. Elizabeth Dunbar, curator of Phantasmia on view now at the Kemper Art Museum writes "Just as history and the human mind are crammed with unresolved, fragmented stories and disjointed images, so too are Ms. Huey's massive, complexly rendered narratives. Steeped in Victorian romance and overlaid with trauma and melancholy, Ms. Huey's mysterious fictions comprise interrelated vignettes that synthesize into fairy-tale-like mediations (a la the Brothers Grimm rather than Walt Disney) on the multiple histories of therapeutic behavior. Her recent works emphasize structures and characters associated with mental hospitals and religious organizations – humanitarian communities that have been closely linked for centuries. Although commonly considered beneficent agents of healing and salvation – therapy for the mind and soul, respectively – these institutions share a shameful, malevolent past stained by corruption, abuse and violence. It is the coexistence of good and evil that Ms. Huey astutely reveals."

In *Chronophobia*, a series of five paintings, time is twisted and reality fractured as Huey paints scenes from the perspective of a mind that has gone off track. Children are cast in the role of protagonist and their dramas are set in classic Huey landscapes replete with wild vegetation, geometric architecture, and a community of exaggerated characters.

The roiling heavens are pierced with lightening and three charred trees stand leafless below imparting an ominous mood upon *Anna and the Yellow Sky*. The three boys in lederhosen and the virginal Anna, represented here in a crèche surrounded by rabbits, were begat by the father of psychoanalysis himself, Sigmund Freud. Or maybe that is Anna O., Freud's first patient to undergo his new brand of therapeutic treatment at La Salpetriere in Paris. Out in the quad of a whole campus of asylum buildings, cohabitating the space with nurses and the committed alike, begs the question of where Freud's own children rank on the scale of the psychologically disturbed.

Decorated like the scene of an accident with tarps, pylons, and orange and white barricades, *The Examination of the Oversensitive* depicts a group of young girls being observed by a man with a camera, as they play amongst themselves. Based on the statistic that one in four children will be diagnosed with some form of mental disorder, it is likely that one of these girls is destined for a life in and out of institutions, like those nestled in the Alps above them. In western culture it has been the job of science and men to identify, study and understand the feeble minded – a chronicle illustrated in the tableaux projected from a renaissance style building guarded by clown-faced soldiers and a squirrel-headed angel.

*The End of the Delusion* is an out and out phantasmagoria of hallucinatory delight. The landscape glows an electric shade that is not cast from the sunless sky above. Flowers with baby faces grow out of the heads of the

attending medical team that waves hello, identified by the red crosses emblazoned on their lapels. Perceptions of scale and time are distorted as a giant Victorian gentleman manufactures more petals. The girl at the center of this vision puts a clock to rest at a gravestone resembling another red cross. The telescope beside her is pointed earthward, set up not for stargazing but perhaps to monitor the dead.

Concurrent with the exhibition Huey (in collaboration with artist Matthew Rodriguez) will be staging clandestine public art installations around the city. Historical figures from Huey's paintings will reappear pasted onto abandoned buildings and trains throughout Portland.

Elizabeth Huey lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She holds a B.A. in psychology from George Washington University and studied at both the New York Studio School and The Marchutz School before receiving her M.F.A. from Yale University.

For more information, please contact the gallery at 503-227-5060 or visit us on the web at [www.qpca.com](http://www.qpca.com). Quality Pictures is open Tuesday – Saturday 11am – 6pm.