



SAMANTHA HARMON, *Family Portrait: Mama Bear and Baby Bear*, plaster and mixed media, portrait packs from Wal-Mart Portrait Studio, 2007



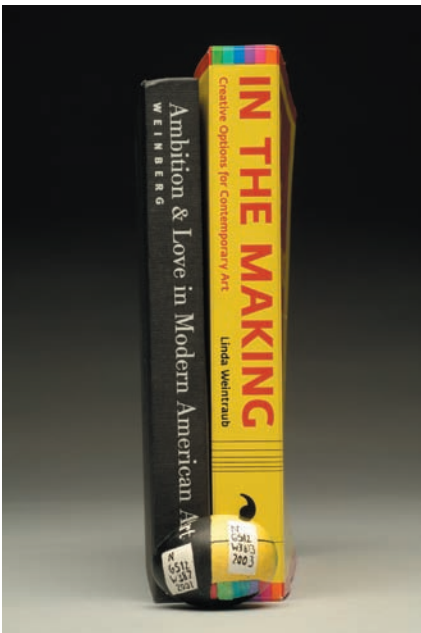
SAMANTHA HARMON, *Perpetual Drawing Board*, synthetic hair, acrylic board, and water, 3'x 4', 2007



Egg No. 1, Playing Card, Aniline dyes and egg



Egg No. 12, Saranac Bottle, Aniline dyes and egg



Egg No. 8, Library Books, Aniline dyes and egg



Egg No. 5, Coaster, Aniline dyes and egg

SAMANTHA HARMON, from the Pysanky Egg Hunt Series, 2007

Samantha Harmon

FAMILY PORTRAIT: MAMA BEAR AND BABY BEAR

My childhood teddy bear, Crusty, has always seemed more human to me than some humans I have encountered. With this in mind, I took him to Wal-Mart portrait studio, put him in a dress shirt, donned my mamma bear head, and had our picture taken together against a traditional gray background. The photo is visual evidence of a new reality that results from a clash of realities regarding family structure, love, ideals and relationships. The bear is humanized as I become more bear-like, both of us departing from our assigned roles to be more closely aligned—yet neither conforming entirely to the other’s physical identity.

PERPETUAL DRAWING BOARD

Seeing swirling hair on a wet shower wall has always been a bit of a meditative and artistic experience for me. Bearing this in mind, I created a station devoted entirely to the creation of these “hair drawings.” Using acrylic board as the paper, various colors of synthetic hair as the graphite, and a spray can, one can sit and create an endless array of impermanent drawings. As the water dries, the hair falls from the board, revealing another blank canvas. If something more permanent is desired, hair spray can be used.

This alternative drawing experience requires no special training or skill, and a preserved end product is not necessary.

PYSANKI EGG HUNT SERIES

My grandfather’s parents came to the U.S. from the Ukraine with some of his siblings before he came into the world. Pysanki is a traditional Ukrainian Easter egg dyeing process. It is a process using wax and dye, usually employing symbolic, often very intricate imagery connected to themes of religion and prosperity. For this project, I used the traditional pysanki process, but in a contemporary art context. The eggs mimic the imagery of the things to which they are affixed, while drawing attention to themselves as independent parts. The eggs, considering the traditional process, are culturally foreign as well as physically foreign—beauty marks on the face of our visual everyday landscape.