

Deena des Rioux

It can be said that the pioneering portfolio of robotic portraits by New York artist Deena des Rioux is 'at the intersection of hybrid culture and the next intelligence'. With the computer as the creative tool, her photo-based sources and scanned objects coalesce to form a seemingly radical notion of the next scientific experiment. For the 20 years since their advent, des Rioux's images, generated as digital photographs and inkjet prints, have earned international venue with their visual references from ancient artifact to Punk, Dada and the Surreal. Any one work may mix items from Native America and Asia, fusing them to an IC package or a disk drive that forms a statement about a controlled process of evolution.

While inspiration for robotic portraits may originally derive from science fiction, theoretical concepts of a part-human/part electronic device are now being played out in the laboratory. Implants, prosthetics, replicates and cognitive reprogramming are the direction and development of science fact.

During exhibition activity, the Star Ledger and the New York Times have devoted space and comment to her selected works that have entered such permanent collections as, New Orleans Museum of Art, Austin Museum of Art, Hofstra University Museum, Islip Art Museum, New York Public Library, the Brooklyn Museum and the artist's alma mater, Rhode Island School of Design Museum.

In Asia, Africa and Europe, acquisition highlights for works by des Rioux are with the International Centre of Graphic Art, Ljubljana, Slovenia; National Centre of Fine Arts, Giza, Egypt; and Tama Art University Museum, Tokyo, Japan. Among solo venues is her new genre début at Columbia University followed by University of Wyoming Art Museum, Elmhurst Art Museum, IL, Hockaday Museum of Art, MT, Grants Pass Museum of Art, OR, Dahl Art Center, SD, and two branches of the State University of New York.

“....digital art is represented by Deena des Rioux’s “Gate Array”, a Cibachrome print that combines human and electronic elements in a fantastic, science fiction-inspired montage. Other impressive iconic figures abound, including Leonard Baskin’s monumental woodcut....”

Helen A. Harrison, Critic / Sunday New York Times, review, “Hofstra Museum at 40: Works on Paper”

“This holds true with Deena des Rioux’s “Odalisk Disk 3”.... The hard edges produced by the digital drawing process are especially well suited to this triple image of a figure set amid computer hardware parts.”

Marilyn S. Kushner, Curator / Prints, Brooklyn Museum of Art, catalog introduction/“Digital: Printmaking Now”

“Deena des Rioux is one of the two invited artists and her aim is to effect a symbiosis between human and high-tech components. In her work, stylized human shapes are animated by their technological surroundings.”

William Zimmer, Critic / Sunday New York Times, review, “Digital Smart Show”, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut

“It works in well with the question about portraiture in the late 20th century.....the reality is not the inner personality; it is not the inner intellectuality, but rather it (des Rioux imagery) is symbolic of the kind of cyberspace neurotransmitters that we all ultimately are.”

Robert Sobiesczek, Curator/Photo, L.A. County Museum of Art, “Photography Biennial”, lecture, Silvermine Guild, New Canaan, CT

“We really have to be alert for new kind of metaphorical visual images and independent voices like Deena des Rioux whose art will be the epitome of insightful applications of these tools like computers....”

Barbara London, Curator / Film-Video, MOMA, for “Deena des Rioux/Disk Drive”, solo exhibition introduction, Columbia U, NY

“The disturbing and unsettling power of (des Rioux) images unquestionably suits the tensions as they rise with the end of the second millennium...”

Roberta Waddell, Curator / Prints, New York Public Library, curatorial statement/acquisitions letter