

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



NOVEMBER 5 - DECEMBER 17, 2011

## ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE

Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present Sacramento-based artist Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor in her first solo show with the gallery, entitled Dreadful Sorry Clementine. Elisabeth's exhibit takes its name from a children's nursery rhyme - the original being sing-songy and childish, but contrasted with dark, melodramatic lyrics. This contrast relates to Elisabeth's work as well, as she continues her practice of walking the line between familiarity and chaos. Working with commonly available materials such as bed sheets, bedding and other discarded domestic fabrics; Elisabeth creates sculptural works that address the unique fascination we experience with the allure of the grotesque.

The exhibit will feature a suite of sculptural figures, ranging in height from 6 to 8 feet tall. Influenced by assemblage artists such as Bruce Conner, Elisabeth engages in the physicality of her materials. In using a new process she developed with cardboard, resin and stiffened fabrics, she is able to shape her creatures with more specific geometries. Elisabeth's execution of the materials suggests both obsessive anxiety and wild abandon.

Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor (b.1963, Los Angeles) took her MFA from UC-Davis in 2005. Elisabeth will be exhibiting in Loop, curated by China Adams in December 2011, and participating in a residency at Bemis Center for Contemporary Art in early 2012. She has exhibited at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena, CA, the San Jose Institute for Contemporary Art, the Torrance Art Museum, the De Saissett Museum and the Kohler Company Space in Kohler, Wisconsin. Her work has been reviewed in numerous publications including Artforum, LA Weekly, ArtWeek, Artillery, and Beautiful Decay. She lives and works in Sacramento, California.



ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



Until, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, blankets, duct tape, paper, drywall screws. 68" x 65" x 60" \$10,000. Sold.

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
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Unless, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, bath rugs, blankets, cushion foam, duct tape, paper, drywall screws. 94" x 60" x 41", \$10,000

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



Nevertheless, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, bath rugs, towels, paper, drywall screws  
96" x 48" x 48", \$10,000

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



Despite, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, blankets, drywall screws. 90" x 55" x 42"  
\$10,000. Sold.

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



However, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, blankets, bath rugs, paper, duct tape, drywall screws. 96" x 60" x 60", \$10,000

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



Otherwise, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, blankets, duct tape, paper, drywall screws, charcoal, 63" x 55" x 34", \$8,000



ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



Instead, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint, bed sheets, blankets, duct tape, paper, drywall screws. 92" x 56" x 72", \$10,000

ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE



Dreadful Sorry Clementine Installation at Charlie James Gallery, November 2011

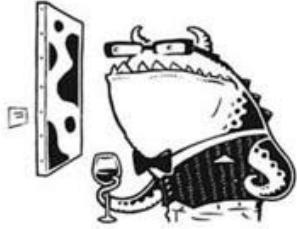
ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR  
DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE

AVAILABLE WORK



Happenstance, 2011. Cardboard, wood, resin, acrylic, paint,  
bed sheets, blankets, bath rugs, paper, drywall screws  
66" x 48" x 60", \$10,000

# Los Angeles Times



## Culture Monster

ALL THE ARTS, ALL THE TIME

Art review: Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor at Charlie James Gallery  
November 25, 2011

Seven large-scale assemblage sculptures by Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor merge the playful with the monstrous, such things not always being as separate and distinctive as one might assume. Textile scraps, especially bedding and carpet remnants (plus a lot of torn cardboard), are piled, glued and screwed onto superstructures built from wood, creating crouched and uncuddly creatures with big feet, muscle-bound legs and oversize heads.

Like a homemade doll morphing into a prehistoric T-rex, the bodily proportions of the beasts, which range from 6 to 8 feet in height, are such that tiny, distended or even absent arms preclude the possibility of a reciprocal embrace. (A few are even crippled, held upright by wooden sticks.) Eye sockets are invariably empty, yielding vacant stares.

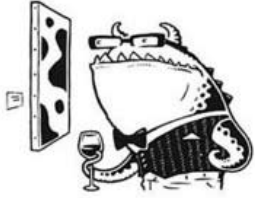
For her second Los Angeles solo show and her first at Charlie James Gallery, the Sacramento-based artist riffs on a familiar if rather creepy Western folk ballad for inspiration. The sculptures, collectively titled "Dreadful Sorry Clementine," refer to a singsong lament in which the death-by-drowning of a young woman is ostensibly leavened by an inescapably lustful appeal to her still-living little sister. The creatures' flower-bedecked heads only add to a general sense of nausea.

O'Connor's engaging work joins a long line of artists' puppets in which surrogates for the unspeakable are given preternatural form. The conceptual offspring of Hans Bellmer and Nick Cave, with a bit of Kim "Mudman" Jones thrown in for good measure, her dolls transform a contemporary cult of the perfect body into a nightmarish horror show.



-- Christopher Knight

# Los Angeles Times



## Culture Monster

ALL THE ARTS, ALL THE TIME

Art review: 'The Loop Show' at Beacon Arts Building

December 21, 2011

Broken furniture, empty cigarette packages, auto parts, old magazines, used aluminum foil, plastic cups, tattered clothing -- cast-off materials have been a staple for artists ever since industrial manufacturing, mass production and planned obsolescence began to leave growing piles of refuse along society's myriad thoroughfares. Along the way, artistic uses as diverse as metaphoric death, surrogacy for social marginalization, incisive formal analysis of creative singularity and even a simple do-gooder impulse for recycling have come into play.

Conceptual art in the 1960s partly proposed that enough objects already exist in the world, eliminating the need for artists to make more. Trash to the rescue. At the Beacon Arts Building, a wide-ranging exhibition titled "The Loop Show" seems to propose -- at least indirectly -- that the Conceptual dictum is now second nature to artists working with throwaways.

The show is a bit all over the place, without the sharpest curatorial focus. But a range of sculptures, installations, paintings, photographs and collages by 19 artists has been assembled by artist/curator China Adams, and all of the works hinge on a particular capacity of cast-off materials to engage.

In the most extravagant case, Dustin Shuler "skinned" a Mercedes Benz. Its once sleek, now flattened body parts are laid out on the floor like a Bavarian bear-skin rug, the ultimate trophy bagged on an Industrial Age safari.

Some are as simple as John Lockett's straightforward photographic "portraits" of tattered chairs left for trash collection on city streets, although the images don't exude much personality. Adams' own suspended "tumbleweed" of shredded scrap paper is laminated for durability, yielding a wry take on vacuous materialism. (The shredded scrap paper takes the form of closed curves -- or, given the curatorial title, "loops.") Amy Drezner has fashioned a meditation circle of vocally chanting dolls, creepy for its reference to the socialization of children, **while Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor contributes a larger-than-life puppet figure composed of textile scraps, related to the lumbering creatures in her current Chinatown show at Charlie James Gallery.**

Don Suggs builds tall, skinny, Brancusi-style "endless columns," one of alternately stacked plastic ashtrays and drinking cups that thrums with the long, slow repetitions of mundane contemplation over cigarettes and drink. Cigarettes in the form of hundreds of discarded Marlboro

packages, cut and pasted into the industrious form of a sprawling honeycomb pattern, animate Robert Larson's big, lacerated red collage.

A forked tree branch wrapped in gold lace and adorned with florid finials and flamboyant tassels by Alexis Zoto simultaneously mocks and marvels at the urge to treat art as a social dowsing rod, leading to hidden treasure, when the reward is actually right before your eyes. Likewise, the activity of drawing with crumpled aluminum foil, glitter and pipe cleaners yields everything-on-the-surface pleasures for Mark Dutcher. And William Ransom holds a gilded but ordinary little walnut a few feet off the floor in the tension between bowed and weighted slats of wood -- potential energy made humble and witty.

Works by seven more artists -- Miyoshi Barosh, Thomas Deininger, Doug Harvey, Anne Hieronymus, Nuttaphol Ma, Stephen McCabe and Ann Weber -- complete the sizable presentation. The tour de force that steals the show, however, is a pair of elaborate constructions by the Institute for Figuring, a collaborative group led by twin sisters Margaret and Christine Wertheim.

Like Mardi Gras costumes shaking their bon-bons atop pedestals, the crenelated sculptures virtually demand attention. One primarily black, the other mostly white, the densely worked sculptures are intricately ruffled mounds of crocheted plastic bags and cellophane interwoven with twist ties, soda can pop-tops, medicine blister packs, drinking straws and other flotsam. Trash never looked so elegant and sparkly.

The result is a slab of artificial coral reef, those ecosystems of remarkable efficiency and diversity that are today threatened by pollution and warming temperatures in many of the world's oceans. (The Wertheim sisters grew up on the Australian coast along the Coral Sea, near the imperiled Great Barrier Reef.) The sculptures are like force fields drawing you into their orbit, catalysts for a network of social interactions that mimics a reef's. It's as if tiny chunks of the immense Great Pacific Garbage Patch -- that huge, swirling mass of debris that formed in rotational ocean currents north of Hawaii -- had been reconfigured for constructive rather than destructive purposes. Gorgeous, absurd and socially productive, these are rare works of art that you long to see ceremoniously dumped into the ocean.

— Christopher Knight

# ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR

## DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE

### Education

- 2005 University of California, Davis, MFA  
1995 California State University, Long Beach, BFA

### Grants/Fellowships/Awards

- 2010 Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Artist-in-Residency, Omaha, Nebraska (for Spring 2012)  
2005 Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York City, New York. Master of Fine Arts Fellowship  
2004 University of California, Davis. Humanities Department Research Fellowship  
Robert Arneson Research Fellowship  
Art Department Block Grant  
Nomination: Dedalus Foundation Master of Fine Arts Fellowship  
2003 University of California, Davis. Art Department Block Grant

### Selected Solo and Partner Exhibitions

- 2011 Art MRKT San Francisco, via Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles  
Mount Saint Mary's College, Los Angeles, California  
2009 No Names, David Salow Gallery, Los Angeles, Calif.  
2008 As Is, Block, Sacramento, California  
2004 Us & Them, Figurative Gallery, La Quinta, Calif.  
2001 John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisc.  
1999 Atkinson Gallery, Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara, Calif.  
1998 Shaw/Guido Gallery, Pontiac, Michigan  
1996 Show'N'Tell, San Francisco, California

### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2010 Torrance Art Museum, California: B13  
Pasadena Armory for the Arts, California: Stitches  
2009 San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose, California: Afterlife  
De Saissett Museum, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California: Natural Blunders  
2008 Verge Projects, Sacramento, California: Circus  
2007 San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose, California: Next/New  
2006 Arts Benicia, Benicia California: What Comes

Around. Kohler Company Space, Kohler, Wisconsin: Arts/Industry Selections. Irvine Cultural Arts Center, Irvine, California: Collaborations. Pewabic Gallery, Detroit, Michigan: Tooth and Claw. CUE Art Foundation, New York City, New York: Joan Mitchell Foundation 2005 Recipient Exhibition. Southern Exposure, San Francisco, California: Momentum. Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, California: Close Calls: 2006. di Rosa Preserve, Napa, California: MFA Selections.

- 2005 Arts Benicia, Benicia, California: Cream  
Richard L. Nelson Gallery, University of California, Davis: MFA 2005 Thesis Exhibition  
Boy Scout Cabin, Davis, California: F.C.M.A.U.D.  
2004 B. Sakata Garo, Sacramento, California: Art Bowl IV  
Santa Fe Clay Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Next Generation  
Tsao Gallery, Davis, California. Us vs. Them  
Tsao Gallery, Davis, California. Against the Wall  
Basement Gallery, University of California, Davis. Kicked  
2003 Angel's Gate Cultural Center, San Pedro, California. Artist's Toys/Art That Works  
2002 Mesa College Art Gallery, San Diego, California, Blue. Invitational  
2001 John Elder Gallery, New York City, New York, Not Your Momma's Dolls

### Academic Appointments

- 2006 - pres Sierra College, Rocklin, California  
Instructor, Drawing, Ceramic Sculpture  
2007 University of California, Davis  
Adjunct Professor, Figure Sculpture  
2006 University of California, Davis  
Adjunct Professor, Advanced Ceramic Sculpture, Spring  
2003 - 2005 University of California, Davis

# ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR

## DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE

Associate Instructor / Instructor of Record,  
Fall 2003 - Summer 2005

2001 - 2003 California State University, Long Beach  
Lecturer, Ceramics Sculpture Spring 2001 -  
Spring 2003

2003 Golden West College, Huntington Beach, CA  
Adjunct Professor

### Commissions

2001 Coyote Creek Golf Course, San Jose, California. The  
Weir/Tracking Pool, Tile Commission. In  
collaboration with Casey O'Connor & Michael Davis  
1998 John Michael Kohler Art Center/New Museum Space,  
Sheboygan, Wisconsin.  
Sculpture Commission. Commission completed at the  
John Michael Kohler Arts Center's Arts/Industry  
Program at the Kohler Company, Kohler, Wisconsin

### Residencies

1998 The John Michael Kohler Art Center's Arts/Industry  
Program at the Kohler Company,  
Kohler, Wisconsin. June-August 1998.  
1997 The John Michael Kohler Art Center's Arts/Industry  
Program at the Kohler Company,  
Kohler, Wisconsin. October-December 1997.

### Visiting Artist Lectures / Panel Discussions

2009 California State University, San Jose  
2006 Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois  
University of Southern California, Roski School of  
Fine Arts, Los Angeles, California  
California State University, Long Beach  
diRosa Preserve, Napa, California, Panel Discussion  
2005 Arts Benicia, Benicia, California. Artists  
Roundtable Discussion with  
San Francisco Chronicle's Kenneth Baker  
2002 Golden West College, Huntington Beach, California  
Mark Taper Center/Inner-City Arts, Los Angeles,  
California  
2000 Mark Taper Center/Inner-City Arts, Los Angeles,  
California

1999 Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara,  
California

### Bibliography

2009 -ArtForum, February 27, 2009. Reproduction and  
review. Micol Hebron. Critics Picks, Los  
Angeles, Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor, David Salow  
Gallery.  
-Artweek, April 2009, Volume 40, Issue 3, pgs. 18-  
19. Reproduction and review. Mickey Stanley.  
Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor: 'No Names' at David  
Salow Gallery.  
-Artillery, March/April 2009, Volume 3, Issue 4,  
Reproduction and review, Mary Anna Pomonis,  
Rapid Fire Reviews Los Angeles, Elisabeth Higgins  
O'Connor, David Salow Gallery  
Beautiful/Decay, July 2009, Issue 1. Reproductions.  
Feature article and interview with Colleen Asper,  
Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor.  
-Daily Serving, February 9, 2009. Reproduction and  
review - [http://www.dailyserving.com/2009/02/  
elisabeth\\_higgins\\_oconnor\\_1.php](http://www.dailyserving.com/2009/02/elisabeth_higgins_oconnor_1.php) Edy Pickens,  
Elisabeth Higgins O'Connor  
-L.A.Weekly, February 12, 2009. Reproduction and  
review. Christopher Miles, Elisabeth Higgins  
O'Connor at David Salow Gallery  
-THE Magazine, April, 2009. Cover image and review,  
Jacki Apple, Review, 'No Names'.  
2005 -2006 -Gregory Amenoff, Joan Mitchell Foundation  
2004 and 2005 MFA Grant Recipients,  
Catalogue Essay. April 2006.  
-Artweek, March 2006. Colin Berry, 'MFA  
Selections' at the di Rosa Preserve  
-Artweek, Volume 36, Issue 8, pgs 13-14,  
October 2005. Reproduction. Colin Berry,  
'Cream: From the Top' at Arts Benicia.

### Public/Corporate Collections

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan,  
Wisconsin  
Kohler Company's Arts/Industry Collection, Kohler,  
Wisconsin

# ELISABETH HIGGINS O'CONNOR DREADFUL SORRY CLEMENTINE

## Private Collections

Virginia A. Groot Foundation, Evanston, Illinois  
Doctors Igal & Diane Silber, Laguna Beach, Calif.  
Michael Rosenthal, San Francisco, California  
Gloria & Sonny Kamm, Northridge, California  
Ruth Kohler, Kohler, Wisconsin  
Jo Lauria, Los Angeles, California  
Daniel First, Los Angeles, California  
Adele Binder, Los Angeles, California

## Representation

Charlie James Gallery  
975 Chung King Road, Los Angeles, California  
213.687.0844

