

Basic Detail Report



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Title: Untitled

Date: 2000

Primary Maker: com.gallerysystems.emuseum.core.entities.RecordXPerson@3ef16

Medium: Cibachrome print

Description: "Untitled" is one of twenty-two images created in 2000, eleven of which were first shown at the Gagosian gallery in Los Angeles. The group presents invented photographs of recognizable social types, perhaps from Los Angeles and Manhattan. In this body of work, Sherman continues her exploration of the connection between costume and identity, returning to her early interest in Hollywood first evidenced in the Untitled Film Stills. In this photograph, an ambiguous larger-than-life female figure fills an otherwise empty picture plane. Her slightly lowered left shoulder tips uncomfortably into the viewer's space, simultaneously beckoning and repelling the viewer. Her shiny cobalt-blue ruffled blouse is contrasted against a barren green-gray backdrop. Cold frontal lighting serves to highlight her indulgent yet unskilled application of makeup—her overdrawn eyebrows and lips and her cotton-candy blush. This painterly application of makeup delivers an expressionistic portrait of a woman engrossed in a daily ritual of attempted self-invention. Over-processed stiff hair hints at a wig. The woman's gaze is transparent, empty. Attention is directed to the teddy bear cradled in her hands. A press-on thumbnail coated in bubble-gum pink lacquers subtly echoes the pastel tones of the facial make-up. Just like the "grade B" actresses in the Untitled Film Stills, this woman is a bit player relentlessly attempting self-discovery through cosmetic modification. The resulting mask calls to mind Japanese Kabuki actors, drag queens, and ladies who cling to dreams of a bygone era. Is this woman a media construct derived from a popular sitcom? Perhaps she is a studio executive's wife or a social outcast. Or is she one of the young women in the Untitled Film Stills, only matured beyond our interest? Still, she may be every American woman; an amalgamation of excessive cosmetic surgery, makeup, and consumer spending. She is a simulation of the media images bombarding our daily lives. This woman is at once our ideal and our nightmare, embodying our relentless need for self-improvement in a society that values the newest of the new. MO'S References
Untitled Janet Wolf, *Feminine Sentences* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Arthur Coleman Danto, *Embodied Meanings: Critical Essays and Aesthetic Meditations* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994); Peter Galassi, "The Complete Untitled Film Stills: Cindy Sherman," *Museum of Modern Art Annual Report* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1995 - 96); Vince Aletti, "The Lady Vanishes," *Village*

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Voice, November 21, 2000, p. 85; Michael Kimmelman, "Cindy Sherman," The New York Times, November 24, 2000, p. E:36; Linda Yablonsky, "Vanity Fare," Time Out New York (November 30-December 7, 2000): p. 91.
Dimensions: 32 1/2 x 22 in.