

Winter : My Secret

Jenn Dierdorf, Brad Parsons, Jeremy Jacob Schlangen

Curated by Brad Silk

January 9 - February 14, 2016

Opening reception Saturday, January 9th, 6 – 8 pm

I tell my secret? No indeed, not I;
Perhaps some day, who knows?
But not today; it froze, and blows and snows,
And you're too curious: fie!
You want to hear it? well:
Only, my secret's mine, and I won't tell.
Or, after all, perhaps there's none:
Suppose there is no secret after all,
But only just my fun.
Today's a nipping day, a biting day;
In which one wants a shawl,
A veil, a cloak, and other wraps:
I cannot ope to everyone who taps,
And let the draughts come whistling thro' my hall;
Come bounding and surrounding me,
Come buffeting, astounding me,
Nipping and clipping thro' my wraps and all.
I wear my mask for warmth: who ever shows

His nose to Russian snows
To be pecked at by every wind that blows?
You would not peck? I thank you for good will,
Believe, but leave the truth untested still.
Spring's an expansive time: yet I don't trust
March with its peck of dust,
Nor April with its rainbow-crowned brief showers,
Nor even May, whose flowers
One frost may wither thro' the sunless hours.
Perhaps some languid summer day,
When drowsy birds sing less and less,
And golden fruit is ripening to excess,
If there's not too much sun nor too much cloud,
And the warm wind is neither still nor loud,
Perhaps my secret I may say,
Or you may guess.

-Christina Rossetti, 1830 - 1894

Cindy Rucker Gallery is please to present Winter: My Secret, featuring works by Jenn Dierdorf, Brad Parsons, Jeremy Jacob Schlangen, curated by Brad Silk, inspired by Christina Rossetti's poem by the same name. Within Rossetti's classic, the speaker coyly opens up about her hidden desires. Wrapped in the heavy garb of Victorian oppression, she finds a glimmer of the Dionysian urges that lay dormant. Not yet ready to unveil, she only alludes to the awakening, like the first signs of a cardinal or buds discarding winters hold. Springing from Rossetti's writings, Brad Silk has curated a collection of works by Jenn Dierdorf, Brad Parsons, and Jeremy Jacob Schlangen have been brought together to explore the expansive reach between winter's frost and spring's flourish.

Jeremy Jacob Schlangen perverts the romanticized imagery of fairytales twisted by an irreconcilable otherness. Pulling from old Hollywood films, Disney classics or nostalgic images, Schlangen creates multimedia works that unveil or create hidden stories within these classics. In his most recent works he washes the imagery of Snow White in a sickeningly sweet pink, reflecting the sugarcoating Disney places on classic Grimms' fairytales and distorting the characters into grotesque and absurd depictions.

Brad Parsons' works with cast multiples of angelic collectables that are joined with an earthy glaze, evoking a haunting reimagining of these kitschy figurines. A sculptural collage coated in decay, these ceramic pieces conjure up some distant, forgotten memory or childhood nightmare, warning of what may come if we lay dormant under heavy winter's veil. His work is not without hope; Parsons doesn't leave his viewer without hope, however, as he also incorporates brilliant gold stars and glimpses of color from the decay as hints of spring's rebirth.

Jenn Dierdorf's latest series of paintings call upon baroque still lifes, with signs of hope emerging from the lurid feel of the works. Most often depicted on a solid background with only a hint of environment, Flower Portraits feature a bouquet of flowers peeking from washes of shadow or bright light, with their curved petals and sharp stems. They call on the Bacchanal; these cut flowers will soon wither

away, but for now they play. Dierdorf's strokes are gestural, making the flowers flirtatious and playful. They are almost animated impressions of flowers in a vase. These paintings represent the visual and emotional complexities of pleasure and pain, the love and loss, and the life and death we experience in repetition throughout our lives.

Cindy Rucker Gallery is located at 141 Attorney Street on the Lower East Side in New York City. Gallery hours are Wednesday - Sunday, 12 - 6 pm and by appointment. For more information about this and other exhibitions, please contact Anastasiya Shelest at anastasiya@cindyruckergallery.com.