
Don’t let the title put you off; this is an impressive and valuable catalog. It skillfully documents the exhibit *Cute & Creepy* at Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts from October 14 to November 20, 2011, curated by FSU painting Professor Carrie Ann Baade. This softback book is rich with detailed images. The high-gloss of the images really makes them pop in contrast to the flat tone text. Flipping through the pages, you can’t resist gawking, which is just right, since gawking is what the show and the catalog are all about. Thoughtful attention has clearly resulted in an effectively designed book.

Nancy Hightower’s companion essay “Revelatory Monsters: Deconstructive Hybrids, the Grotesque and Pop Surrealism” is an examination of humanity’s obsession with that which terrifies/pleasures “the monster” and that which repels/intrigues “the grotesques” and how this duality is at the very core of humanity. Ms. Hightower’s essay is also a guiding narrative to select exhibition pieces and takes the reader on a tour of the many aspects of pop surrealism and what it has become today. Her lush descriptions and scholarly references bring validity to an art style that in the past been criticized as being kitschy and or lowbrow. The following pages feature the artists in alphabetical order by last name. Each artist’s page features images, an artist statement, and artist contact information with exhibition history included.

The technical skill of many of the images represented in this catalog can only be described as something from the Northern Renaissance, reminiscent of the detail quality Hieronymus Bosch executed in his panels “Garden of Earthly Delights.” *Cute and Creepy* is a lovingly devoted grandchild of Bosch’s triptychs.

This exhibition catalog is an example of a publication with subject demand. Many art students/patrons are looking for just these subjects: pop surrealism, steampunk, goth, grotesque, macabre, counterculture and so on. It took artists like Annie Owen’s *Hi-Fructose* and Mark Ryden’s successful publication of *The Tree Show* to give these subjects an “art book” to take seriously. *Cute & Creepy* not only lives up to its name but adds to the fine-art validity of pop surrealism. It is a suitable addition to any art library and may be most useful to an art and design school library.

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