

Andrea Bowers  
*The New Woman's Survival Guide*  
October 29th – December 17th, 2011

Opening reception: Saturday, October 29th, 6 – 8pm

The Andrew Kreps Gallery is pleased to present Andrea Bowers' second exhibition at the gallery entitled, *The New Woman's Survival Guide*. Consisting of drawings layered over wallpaper made up of hand-bills and protest signs collected by the artist, the show contrasts previous tropes of feminism with current ones.

Three walls in the gallery will be covered completely with recent feminist activist signs – paired with brightly colored "wall paper" which grounds contemporary activist rhetoric to a more traditional idea of the feminine in the form of floral or glittered wallpaper patterns. And upon this will be layered starkly captured graphite drawings.

Drawing inspiration from a feminist handbook published and circulated in the '60's, Andrea Bowers has made 10 drawings based directly on "ads" placed within. The graphics are stark, and sometimes hilarious, one featuring a group of women dancing in a circle hands entwined, emulating the Matisse painting *Dance*. In the famous painting the genitalia of the female dancers is avoided, but in the '60's version it is drawn in darkly, intentionally eliciting the viewers gaze, with the banner stasting above: . In another drawing, Andrea has used a photo of a group of women gazing with wonder at another's genitalia, her legs spread in the air – apparently at a party at which women would gather to explore the taboo and never-spoken about parts of their own and other's bodies.

In contrast to these drawings are three works, which are photo-realist drawings of pictures that the artist took while at recent feminist marches and rallies. The images themselves are notable, as the purely feminist vernacular has been replaced with one that is a combination of Feminism, LGBT rights, and Latina activist language. The subject of the drawing has a classic feminist tattoo featuring a red fist in the sign of the female – and in another image, a woman at the same march wears a t-shirt, which decries rights for Latina LGBT youth. The drawings in this series of works are rendered in an astonishingly detailed manner for which the artist is known. One in particular is especially arresting insofar that even the detail of the sunlight hitting the hair on the female subjects arm is perfectly rendered.

By juxtaposing the historical and contemporary tropes of activism the artist foregrounds not only the trajectory and evolution of the feminist dialogue, but also it's difficulties maintaining pertinence and purity in an ever-growing complex political environment.

Andrea Bowers received her MFA at the California Institute of the Arts in 1992. Solo exhibitions include: *Secession*, Vienna, Austria; *REDCAT*, Los Angeles, CA; and the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA. Her work has been included in exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Bard College, Annendale-on-Hudson, NY; Sammlung Goetz, Seedamm Kulturzentrum, Switzerland; Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY; Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst; Armand Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL.

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