

Reviews

COMMENTARY ON HUNTING & GATHERING :

Karen Kienzle, curator, Director Palo Alto Art Center. Oct. 2007 exhibition introduction

"Susan Felter's lushly detailed, hyperreal compositions beautifully explore the intersections of man and nature, fantasy and reality. Felter's process, scanning and photographing hundreds of elements and carefully placing and layering them, reflects the world's increasing power and interest in controlling nature."

Fred Setterberg, author and arts commentator. Stretcher.org April, 2007 on-line essay

"As you look closer, the reassuring loveliness of these scenes doesn't quite hold, because Felter's vision of nature includes unexpected, discomfiting encounters. ... Her work roves over a terrain of contradiction in which the peaceable kingdom has swallowed an omnivorous jungle. In Western Stream, we're confronted with the sheer improbability of stumbling upon a sand bed that includes a colonial era Mexican earring, I Ching coin, and gold chain—the embedded symbolic history of the West that also speaks to human conflict and ecological devastation."

Andrea Pappas, Assoc. Prof. Art History, Santa Clara University. March 2002 published essay

In these "post-natural ecosystems... Felter, a pioneer in the adaptation of new technologies to the visual arts," is now "examining the impact of humans as witting and unwitting agents of ecological destruction, metamorphosis, and renewal... the series presents seductively beautiful images of Pacific coastal tide pools, those frontiers between land and sea. A closer look, however, reveals open oysters, broken crab claws, and pearls - natural or artificial... Felter raises deep issues regarding humanity's relationship to nature in an age in which we can alter, and patent as a commodity, the genetic structure of the flora and fauna in our little corner of Eden."

COMMENTARY ON THE CARTOONS & ANCESTORS :

Catherine Maclay, art reviewer, San Jose Mercury News, June 13, 1997 printed art review

"A blond woman in a strapless gown leans in from the left.... A masculine hand writes on a folded matchbook: "They're on to you." ... Felter's teasingly evocative art combines conventions of photography and painting as well as film to re-create this Hollywood style moment of truth in a single vivid image. Elsewhere, this eclectic artist draws on motifs from Spanish baroque, Italian Renaissance and classical Greek art."

Judith Dunham, curator, author, art reviewer. March 1988 exhibition introduction

"Felter draws with a linear style full of whimsey and sensitivity.... An electric illumination, created by vibrant forms and lines against dark voids, contributes to both the seductive beauty and the narrative drama. ... For Felter, the computer is a tool with which she discovers and communicates her distinctly individual thoughts and vision."

Jim Jordan, reviewer, Artweek Magazine. April 4, 1987 Artweek review

"The very obvious illusory nature of the circus and its fragility... were her real subjects. ... Similarly, the angular, cartoonish quality of her Miró-esque settings and characters, as in The Smoker [Bad Company], provide a world that caricatures our everyday existence."

COMMENTARY ON THE RODEO & CIRCUS WORK :

Lindsey Kouvaris, Curator, de Saisset Museum. May 2010 exhibition introduction

"In 1980 she won a Guggenheim Fellowship in Photography, a grant that supported her Rodeo and Circus series..... In a nod to Hollywood filmmaking (the artist earned her MFA in Motion Pictures from UCLA), Felter combined flash photography with available light and extended exposures to create dynamic pictures that blend texture, detail, motion, and abstraction."

JoAnne S. Northrup, Chief Curator, San Jose Museum of Art. April 2009 catalog essay

"....Felter's circus images are clearly imprinted with 1980s hairstyles, make-up, and costuming, yet somehow the work retains relevance, thanks to the artist's unusual angles, bold cropping, and the judicious use of color and flash. Moved by the forces of illusion and desire, Felter works in concert with her subjects to seduce, entertain, and comment on the way we distract ourselves from the vicissitudes of life."

Hal Fischer, Reviewer, Artforum Magazine. Summer 1980 Artforum review

"In photographs made at western rodeos, Susan Felter displays a sure instinct for the mythic and erotic overtones of this true American ritual..... Her manipulation of rich unsubtle hues in an almost posterboard visage, combined with her erotic sensibility, demonstrates a skillful transference of mass media strategies to the personal photograph...."