

Hey, Cutie at Pilot Gallery

Pretty in pink. I didn't see the movie but I saw the exhibition, *Hey, Cutie*. Which sort of counts. Three women, Ophelia King, Amy Unkovich and Nina Joy, doing impersonations of Molly Ringwald at Pilot 2 Gallery, Hamilton. Well, not quite. Far more sophisticated, but hey! Cute.

First you paint your gallery space pink. Literally. This is a metaphor free zone. And not just any old pink. Three different subtle shades were required and applied lovingly to every moulded surface, architectural edifice, orifice and architrave. The ceiling too. Pink, with evocative names like Tony, Wax Flower and, yes, Romantic.

And, yes, dear reader, I married her! Well at least I swooned, metaphorically speaking, as I walked into the space.

To add to the tender, loving, amorous and dreamy ambience, long thin delicate grey coloured drapes were hung across the windows and at the rear of the space to mask the crap out the back.

What a transformation. What a makeover. A dingy, dirty, empty and vacant commercial shopping space was transmogrified into something sitting several steps this side of a bordello. It was an apotheosis of paint.

Into this princess perfumery, lit with low hung lighting, were placed the sculptural concoctions of Amy Unkovich. And what wonderful fabrications they were. Mindful of the need to take consideration of décor into account, these fantasies took on the configurations of confection with, as so tastefully realized, the theme of pink in mind. The largest of them, was a 3D zig-zag formation, a kind of lightning bolt thing looking like something Zeus might have inadvertently left lying about after a rollicking Dionysian party, good enough to eat. It had the appearance of lolly cake dimpled with sweets.

A second work, placed casually up against a pillar presented a smaller flat version in two parts while another piece, a flat large slab with a worked textural surface, sat on the floor, looking like something ready to cut into slices and shared around.

What the show as a whole presented was a sort of visual surround-sound, an overwhelming sensuous delight that crossed the boundaries between art, architecture and interior decoration. The different pinks had been judiciously applied to various architectural features of the gallery so as to enhance the geometry of the concrete forms which then played off against the geometry of the sculpture. The gallery in turn became a giant sculpture.

Unkovich also cleverly used part of an existing curve formation in the flooring, enhanced it with plaster, creating a counterpoint juxtaposed against the angular elements of the gallery construct.

All three artists were influenced by and exemplify the work of Mexican architect, Luis Barragan, a follower of European modernism with emphasis on minimal clean abstract line but departing from it in his use of bright colour. Sort of Le Corbusier on acid. His fifties and sixties work gave the international style a

good kick in the pants which makes, *Hey, Cutie*, a salute to Barragan in a deliberately girly sort of way, playing with space and light as well as stony textural surface.

A complete performance in flushed and blushing colour.

Peter Dornauf