

## Joyce Kubat

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### Press Release

Joyce Kubat continuously probes the complexities of identity and representation. Highly pigmented inks, transparent layers and razor thin lines are the bread and butter of her formal investigations. The subjects' strange, beautiful and provocative veneers culled from a vast archive of psychological narrative are what proliferate the visual experience...a collected world peopled with unusual nonetheless dignified characters.

In a manner fitting of baby birds<sup>1</sup>, we the viewer peck away at Kubat's drawings searching the morsels of masks, scars and grins of her practice only to find more facets and secrets of our mortality. The result is an intimate, perhaps slightly naughty vision of humanity as she plays with the imagination of her viewers, and their preconceptions and fears. Gestural, fluid and sometimes spectral, Joyce Kubat works to reframe and recontextualize her subjects into bizarre yet familiar beings that explore the ambiguous and shifting boundaries between public and private selves.<sup>2</sup> Each visual orifice offers a forbidden entry into the not-so-easy discovery of her objective. The contemplative, morose and uncanny hint at the sense of responsibility faced by the artist in choosing to create, and give attention to what the drawing does to the image as well as what the image does to the drawing.

In an age dominated by the digital image and mass media, Joyce Kubat seems to cherish the physicality of the human touch with work that is a testament to the meaning and potency of the creative endeavor.

*In these modern times, I believe an artist has to be fearless, to push past barriers, to get angry enough with oneself to reject the ordinary, and to say something real.*

– Joyce Kubat

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<sup>1</sup> Herring Gull chicks are entirely dependent on their mothers for food, yet they're born with a powerful instinct. Whenever they see a bird beak, they frantically peck at it, begging for their favorite food: a regurgitated meal. But this reflex can be manipulated. Expose the chicks to a fake beak—say, a wooden stick with a red dot that looks like the one on the end of an adult herring gull's beak—and they peck vigorously at that, too. Should the chicks see a wood stick with three red dots, they peck even faster. Abstracting and exaggerating the salient characteristics of a mother gull's beak strengthens the response. The phenomenon is known as the "peak-shift effect," since a peak pecking response comes from a shifted stimulus. In it lies one of the core principles of visual art.

<sup>2</sup> Studies show that humans are able to recognize visual parodies of people faster than an actual photograph. The fusiform gyrus, an area of the brain involved in facial recognition, responds more eagerly to caricatures than to real faces, since the "cartoon" emphasize the very features that we use to distinguish one face from another. (Lehrer, Jonah, Unlocking the Mysteries of the Artistic Mind, Psychology Today, July, 1, 2009)

Joyce Kubat holds a BS in Psychology from Michigan State University and continued her studies in New York City at both Brooklyn College and the Art Students League of New York. She lives and works in Huntington, NY, and has exhibited throughout Long Island, New York City, Italy, and elsewhere.

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