

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Carrier, David, "Jim Hodges: Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland," *Artforum*, April 2005, pp. 192-193



Lisa Kereszi, *Girls, Show World Center, Times Square, NYC, 2000*, color photograph, 30 x 40".



Jim Hodges, *Folding (into a greater world)*, 1998, mirror on canvas, 72 x 96".

joint neon is reflected in the small mirrored tiles that form a concentric-square motif on the club's dropped ceiling. In this acrid close-up, the chintzy decor is interrupted by electrical wiring and a sprinkler head. Here, as elsewhere in her oeuvre, Kereszi focuses on moments at which the bleak realities of desire, utility, and economy visibly outpace the dreamy deceptions of market novelty. Penetrating the glitz of commerce, she reflects on the intersection of private self and public illusion.

Pointing out Kereszi's awareness of her own implication in this often-fraught relationship are what might be called her trompe l'oeil photographs—images that initially appear to be paintings. The affecting *Chalkboard. Mrs. Luz's Classroom, P.S. 26, Building 711, Governors Island, NY, 2003*, a quasi-abstract close-up taken in the abandoned institution of the title, is one of these, as are the photographs of murals, *Trash Can, Broadway Arcade, Times Square, NYC* and *Ferris Wheel Mural, Broadway Arcade, Times Square, NYC* (both 2004). In the latter, mist-shrouded buildings tower above the clouds in the idyllic mural that occupies most of the image. This grandeur contrasts starkly with the photo's lower portion, in which a dented rubber trash can, a black handle sticking anomalously out of it, stands on a scarred concrete floor. An orange extension cord hangs from the top of the photo and forms a tangle on the ground, as if linking the daydream of heaven depicted on the wall to a sadder reality.

Such crucial symbolic elements, which are elevated through juxtaposition into emblems of transcendence, emphasize

Kereszi's talent for desecrating and depicting "random" scenes so strikingly composed that one wonders at first whether she has arranged them herself. It soon becomes clear, however, that she simply has an eye for fortuitous connections hidden in plain sight. This talent for using the camera as a tool in the exploration of the heightened instant is one that she shares with Jodie Vinceta Jacobson, who exhibited concurrently with her in Yancey Richardson's back gallery. Allowing the synchronicities and contradictions presented by liminal space to pour into the rest of our lives, Kereszi guides us through our own lost moments.

—Tom Breidenbach

CLEVELAND

JIM HODGES MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Jim Hodges loves colored paper and pencils, ceramic and plastic wall sockets, wood and metal panels, cheap scarves, light bulbs, metal chains, and mirrors. At the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, wall-based constructions made from these materials and many others fill two enormous galleries.

In the first room, the white, blue, and green lights of *With*, 1999, the reds, pinks, and whites of *Abbbb*, 2000, and the various blinking bulbs of the two-part *Ultimate Joy*, 2001, are reflected in the shattered mirror of *Untitled (near and far)*, 2002. Entering the second room requires walking between the parts of *Into out of red*, 2005, a diptych wall draw-

ing executed by Hodges's assistant Patrick Evans in collaboration with students from three local art schools. Once through, visitors are confronted with *this (from ordinary life)*, 1999, a revolving rectangular mirror; *on we go*, 1996, a spider web made of pins and metal chain; *With the Wind*, 1997, a construction of layered scarves and silk flowers; *As close as I can get*, 1998, a large square field pieced together from color chips; and *Into Everything*, 2002, a perspectival arrangement of brightly colored paper. There are no conventional paintings or traditional drawings in the exhibition, though the cut paper and tissue in the delicate *Overlaps under there*, 1999, does have a painterly look.

A virtuoso bricoleur, Hodges uses extremely varied materials to retell the history of modernism in his own terms. He restages pointillism in his lightbulb sculptures; evokes Cubist collage in *Untitled (Landscape VI)*, 2000–2001; and plays with Surrealist themes in *on we go* and *Spinning Eyes*, 1998. He also references Michelangelo Pistoletto in *Folding (into a greater world)*, 1998, which is made from small, cut pieces of mirror, and *Oh, forever*, 2001, which is constructed of aluminum foil. The historical allusion of his digital print *a small ending*, 2001, is less clear. But the nods to Robert Rauschenberg's hanging veils, Ellsworth Kelly's paintings, and Dan Flavin's light sculptures are clearly visible. Hodges's excision of leaf shapes from a photograph of a tree to reveal the white paper underneath in *In this place where we meet*, 2004, seems to allude to contemporary photography, and the site-specific *Into out of red* evokes Sol LeWitt.

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Describing Hodges's exhibition by identifying his references can make him seem like an academic appropriationist. On the contrary, he is an entirely intuitive artist who knows enough about modernism to avoid mere pastiche. He makes everything in a style that is unmistakably his own, a remarkable achievement for someone whose many historical interests are so far-reaching. In allowing us to see how handsome very banal materials can be and what a wealth of historical allusions they may contain, he appears to be a lover of classic *arte povera* who translates that style into a distinctively American artistic idiom. Hodges is amazingly light-footed: Revealing in his titles an essentially romantic sensibility, his art demonstrates a powerful drive to find poetry in the everyday.

—David Carrier