

Jack Smith, Jackie Winsor, John Coplans, Lynne Yamamoto

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P.S. 1 has opened its crisp, well-lighted new galleries with a wonderful variety of shows that celebrate its mission as an alternative exhibition and work space. The main show, "Jack Smith: Flaming Creature," documents the works and times of this extraordinary underground filmmaker and performance artist who was seminal to artists of the 1960s and '70s. Andy Warhol derived the term "superstar" from him, and Smith worked with the avant-garde of the time, including Jonas Mekas, Rauschenberg, La Monte Young, Oldenberg, Gordon Matta-Clark, and Simone Forti.

A rear-view projection of Smith's film *Flaming Creatures* sets the tone for homegrown Dionysian hedonism, with flower children dancing in or out of costumes. The film, along with Stan Brakhage's *Scorpio Rising* and the work of Mekas, challenged censorship laws all the way up to the Supreme Court. Curator Edward Leffingwell brilliantly combines photographs of Smith's daily life with documents such as court rulings and props from his performances. The costumes Smith made are astonishing works of assemblage. Displayed in the center of the gallery on mannequins, a multibreast dress and the "lobster lady" kimono are virtual eruptions of dreams

into reality. Smith's ephemeral publications with psychedelic lettering and illustrations evoke the persona of the artist and the sensibility of the whole period.

The 30-year survey of Jackie Winsor's sculpture is anchored by her signature rope pieces, coiled to form textured circles on the ground or rising to form a cylinder. The force of these pieces contrasts with the brick square on the ground that places her among her peers, such as Sol Lewitt and Carl Andre. In other works, Winsor transforms squares and spheres into a complex investigation of surface, structure, and materials. There's a baroque sensibility here in her use of gold that reflects light, or mirrored glass to mask and dissolve the mass and to create a play of perspectives.

John Coplans's "Self-Portrait"—enormous photographs of every part of the 73-year-old artist's naked body except the face—gives an oblique, disorienting portrait. Giant palm prints, a foot, then feet, his torso, his back all become massive abstract shapes seen from every angle against a bare ground. The central gallery is given over to huge shots of his headless torso that suggest a classical frieze, such as the Pergamon altar of titans. The images of the body as a mass worn by time and dragged down by gravity seem like a celebration of Silenus, the god of excess in antiquity.

Through cool, elegant, often minimal means, Lynne Yamamoto expresses a passionate involvement with her subject: her grandmother, who arrived in Hawaii as a mail-order bride in 1914. An installation of stiff shirt sleeves reaching out from a wall, evoking her grandmother's work as a laundress, is both aggressive and pleading. Most affecting here is a row of nails in the wall at the height of four feet, seven inches, which is how tall she stood. Inscribed in the head of each nail is a word: "cook," "clean," "boil," "scrub," "wash," "iron," and so on, spelling out the everyday tasks performed by her grandmother. These works memorialize a woman Yamamoto knows only through a parent's memories.

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