

ARTFORUM

Silvia Bächli

By Francesco Stocchi

5 April 2006



Comprised of a series of drawings and an installation, Silvia Bächli's first show in Italy offers a romanticized, intimate view of the artist's private world. In the first room, thirty small drawings have been hung cleanly and gently, each blending with the pallor of the wall as though they were generated organically from its surface. Although the drawings vary in size, material, and composition, they appear strongly related to one another. The imagery spans geometric compositions and details of bodies and flowers, but their straightforward visual impact and their spontaneous, dreamy technique, confer upon them a unified sense of fragile grace. The impact of the works as a whole is greater than that of each piece taken individually; the fragmented composition of each drawing, made in accordance with the simplest of themes, seduces us into staring at these apparently futile images, works generated through a quiet and unflappable restraint. The artist's personal style is made all the more stark by her employment of an exclusively black-and-white palette. In the back room, a series of colorful toys modeled after everyday objects are displayed on the pavement of the gallery floor. In contrast to their physical manifestations, the projection of the objects' shadows on the wall beyond imbues them with a brutal, haunted aspect, awakening us from our walking slumber.