

HEIDI WOOD

Heidi Wood, *Date limite de consommation (Use-by Date)*

Galerie Anne Barrault
22, rue Saint Claude, Paris
October 18 – December 20 2008

Heidi Wood embraces the visual efficiency of abstract geometric painting through a strategic application of shapes and colors. By rotating a selection of her new and recent paintings and photographs during each week of this exhibition's nine-week run, Wood insists nothing is final in her practice. The general palette of these works is derived from the women's autumn/winter 2008 collections featured at Galleries Lafayette, one of Paris's premier department stores. Wood also gathers the eerily familiar yet enigmatic shapes in her paintings from popular iconography – street signs, souvenirs, billboards and institutional architecture. In her 2007 series of photographs and illustrations *Authentic New Mexico*, she unravels the myth-making potentials of image and design. Documenting several “faux-dobe” neighborhoods and businesses, including a McDonald's, she highlights the construction of cultural identity and its systematic distribution. In *Authentic New Mexico 1*, for example, Wood juxtaposes a photograph of a teepee-shaped drive-through with her rendition of a kachina doll, the popularized Hopi totem.

In turning the gallery into an evolving showroom and allowing her works to “freeze” only when acquired by a collector or museum, Wood demonstrates her estimation of the art market. While her paintings are unique, they are available for customization according to patron's specifications. Likewise, Wood treats her painted canvases – often made on upholstery fabric – like disposable products. As stated in the title of the show, “use-by date,” these works have a shelf life: five years. After this period, if Wood has not sold a painting, she will destroy it – enacting perhaps the sharpest assessment of trade in visual currency.

Lillian Davies

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