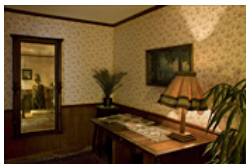
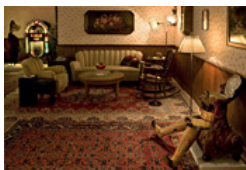




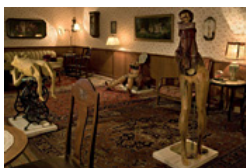
**Edward Kienholz**  
*Roxys*  
 1960-61  
 David Zwirner



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 1960-61  
 David Zwirner



**Edward Kienholz**  
*Roxys*  
 1960-61  
 David Zwirner



**Edward Kienholz**  
*Roxys* (detail of *Miss Cherry Delight*)  
 1960-61  
 David Zwirner



**T.J. Wilcox at Metro Pictures,**  
 2010, installation view



**T.J. Wilcox at Metro Pictures,**  
 2010, installation view

## GOTHAM ART & THEATER by Elisabeth Kley

Edward Kienholz' celebrated period piece, *Roxys* (1960-61), a haunting recreation of the salon of a famous 1940s Los Angeles brothel, was nostalgic even when Kienholz first made it almost 50 years ago. Period furniture and dim lighting, a jukebox playing big band tunes, and a goldfish bowl with live fish are among the details. Every table has a doily and the loudly ticking grandfather clock is set to the present time.

Original in every part except the walls and wallpaper, *Roxys* has now been reconstituted inside a custom-built room in David Zwirner's easternmost space on West 19th Street, May 6-June 19, 2010. In its previous incarnations, viewers could walk freely through the installation. The vestibule, with a table of *Look* magazines and an old calendar set to June 1943, can still be entered. The rest of the installation is blocked off by a velvet rope, but it's also visible through large windows cut in one side of the wall.

Seven frightening assemblage sculptures made of mannequin parts and found objects -- portraits of the madam, five prostitutes and an African-American serving boy -- inhabit this otherwise cozy time capsule. The contrast between the room's clichéd sentimentality and its monstrous tenants redoubles the power of Kienholz's weathered, almost decomposing personages.

Each of the characters has a name and a body that tells a story. The madam is a ghoul with a head made out of a grimacing boar's skull, and *Fifi*, *A Lost Angel* has a clock over her stomach to ensure that her clients get no extra time. *Miss Cherry Delight* is a rotating female mannequin head suspended from a picture frame; *A Lady Named Zoa* is constructed from a letterbox with a door hanging open to reveal the unborn babies inside; and *Cockeyed Jenny* has a black bra stretched around the garbage can body whose open lid serves as her head.

Representing women as hollow receptacles made of discarded objects reveals a jaundiced point of view that today's emancipated sex workers would hardly appreciate. When discussing this work, Kienholz recalled youthful visits to brothels that left him frightened and unable to perform. His relationships with women did improve, and he and his wife Nancy Reddin collaborated on all of his work as a duo after 1972. Twenty-two years later, Kienholz died of a heart attack. He was royally embalmed and buried in the passenger seat of a 1940 Packard coupe with the ashes of his dog, a deck of cards and a bottle of vintage wine.

*Rox's* was first shown in Los Angeles at the legendary Ferus Gallery, which was founded by in 1957 by Keinholz and Walter Hopps, and is now being represented by Zwirner and Tim Nyehaus. Appreciative crowds viewed Kienholz's 1966 solo exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in spite of the fact that politicians had condemned his work obscene and anti-American. Roxy's current owner has already bought it twice, and is now offering to relinquish it for the second time.

### Three films by T.J. Wilcox

The Seattle-born New York artist T.J. Wilcox (b. 1975) is enthralled by recovering the past, as well as by unnatural combinations, captivity and freedom, the intertwining of life and death -- and quiet tragedy. Three of his most recent films can be seen at Metro Pictures, along with some related photographic screens, May 8-June 12, 2010.

The *Heir and Astaire* (2010) tells the story of the ill-fated romance between Charles Cavendish, the second son of the Duke of Devonshire, and Adele Astaire, Fred's sister and first dancing partner -- a union between a traditional British aristocrat and a brash American showgirl. In the film, period photographs, drawings and films (tersely and evocatively subtitled by Wilcox) alternate with fragments of an interview with the 90-year old Dowager Duchess of Devonshire in a fussy old fashioned room, accompanied by the sound of a ticking clock.

Wilcox's fascination with the interaction of different eras is encapsulated by an image of the remains of the swimming pool Adele incongruously installed outside the walls of the 900-year-old castle where the couple lived after they married in 1932. The water has completely disappeared -- all that is left is a perimeter of stones outlining a rectangle in the lush green grass. The Duchess recalls a small pavilion by the pool, filled with suntan lotion in rainy Ireland.

Using such specific details, Wilcox compresses an entire dramatic life into a ten-minute film, moving quickly from happiness to tragedy. Adele gave birth to three children, but all of them died soon after they were born, and Charles died of alcoholism at age 38. Relics of their lost Jazz Age bounce off the immediacy of the beautiful lilacs now blooming in the castle garden and the aged reality of the Dowager Duchess, a living relic of the time, whose remaining stay with us is likely to be short.



**T.J. Wilcox**  
*The Heir and Astaire* (video still)  
 2010  
 Metro Pictures



**T.J. Wilcox**  
*The Heir and Astaire* (video still)  
 2010  
 Metro Pictures



**Colette**  
*Records from the story of my life series 1978-2007: Real Dream*  
*Installation Performance at*  
*Clocktower*  
 1975  
 Pavel Zoubok Gallery



**Colette**  
*Colette Lamp*  
 1973  
 Pavel Zoubok Gallery

The equally poignant *Eau de Vie*, playing in the front gallery, quietly explains the unusual Japanese practice of using leashed wild cormorants trained to catch trout at night. And *Yours, Patsy Cline*, a tribute to the country singer who died in a plane crash 50 years ago, alternates subtitled photos of the singer that quickly tell the story of her life with over 30 amateur YouTube performances of three of her most famous songs -- life's brevity versus emotion's immortality. Prices range from \$30,000 to \$50,000.

#### **Colette: Girl Talk**

A metaphorical descendent of the Countess Castiglione (glamorous inventor of the staged self-portrait photograph), Colette has lived out a continuous masquerade since her first private performance in 1970, taking on appropriated personas including de Sade's Justine, Manet's Olympia, Mata Hari and, most recently, a creature named Lumiere. Blurring the boundaries between public and private as well as between installation, shop window and stage, she poses and performs, often sleeping, inside elaborate, almost Rococo environments she creates in her apartments, and in galleries, nightclubs and stores.

Colette uses her performance documentation as elements in small two-dimensional works, and many examples of her almost overpowering ornamentation were on view in "Girl Talk," at Pavel Zoubok Gallery, Apr. 22-May 22, 2010. Somewhere between paintings and photos, they are embellished with pale layers of paint, foil or glitter, and overlaid with resin, creating a sort of fantasy mist that can bring Joseph Cornell to mind. She often surrounds her own image with perforation marks, as if she is a paper doll waiting to be cut out. Sometimes the perforation marks move around her figure in strange geometric diagrams like those used by Cocteau, John Graham or Pavel Tchelitchev.

In a picture titled *The Real Dream* (1975), Colette lies on a bed of pink swag and ruffles, echoing the poses of centuries of nudes. Reflected in a fabric-surrounded mirror in the center of the image, she seems double and redouble herself infinitely into the distance within the frame. The cloying heavy drapery resembles the inside of a jewelry box -- or even a coffin.

The exhibition also includes two armless mannequin sculptures swathed in stiffened white cloth, a reference to the Surrealist roots of Colette's work. Light bulbs are where the heads should be, covered by upside down half-globe shades that propel illumination to the ceiling. Lights also shine from inside their hollow bodies, thus completely and conclusively portraying her persona, Lumiere, as an incandescent manifestation. Prices range from \$3,000 for the smallest mixed media works to \$25,000 for the mannequin sculptures.

#### **Brent Green: Gravity**

In the 1970's, Kentucky hardware store clerk Leonard Wood's wife Mary had terminal cancer. Hoping to cure her with the magic of art, he began turning his house into a madcap healing machine, with twisted walls, oddly shaped windows and uneven ceilings. Even though she died, he kept on building for 20 years, until he fell off the roof and had to enter a nursing home.

The self-taught Pennsylvania artist Brent Green (b. 1978), who has previously shown stop-motion animated films (viewable at his [Nervous Films](#) website), has gently and poignantly echoed Wood's project by erecting several eccentric wood buildings in his family's rural Pennsylvania yard. He's also made a full length movie to tell a tangentially related story. One house, along with selections from the film, can be seen in "Gravity Was Everywhere Back Then," at Andrew Edlin Gallery, Apr. 17-June 5, 2010.

Made of weathered materials, the dwelling installed in the gallery conjures up the 1930's rather than the era when its original was built, creating a double layer of retrospection. The living room walls are painted a pale blue, decorated here and there with curlicues of soot. A cartoon-style wooden piano is topped with two flower-shaped gramophone speakers, and a whimsical lamp / chair on wheels has an asymmetric back that that rises overhead to curve over the sitter, ending in a light bulb.

Portions of Green's stop-motion film are playing projected and on monitors. Intertwining Bible stories with life, an actor playing Wood works in the backyard to a soundtrack of old hymns, and a quavering voice describes Noah's ark as rain falls in the kitchen and an animated blue sea fills the yard. Mary Leonard appears as a transparent spirit walking down the stairs. She's also seen sleeping in the bed of the house on display, wearing a halo of light bulbs.

The two rather hip young actors playing Wood and his wife (an Indie musician and Green's girlfriend) grate slightly against the project's period atmosphere, and the furniture is a bit cute. Nevertheless, the show is an interesting response to Wood's fascinating death-defying project. The fact that Green's girlfriend plays Mary adds a layer of potential future sadness, and makes Wood's 40-year-old loss more tangible. Prices range from \$850 for Green's copy of a heartbreaking letter Wood wrote to his dead wife (in an edition of 30) to \$35,000 for the piano.

### Jorge Pardo's labyrinth

When Chelsea art dealer Zach Feuer moves his gallery into larger quarters in the old Dia Art Center ground-level space on West 22nd Street, the gorgeous mustard, orange and yellow tiles that Jorge Pardo installed in September 2000 will be covered up by another floor.

A different Pardo work that is already only a memory is his 2007 installation at Friedrich Petzel Gallery across the street. Dimly lit by colored lamps that looked like spun sugar hanging from the ceiling, with wine cabinets placed around the room and sculptural asymmetric clocks hanging on the walls, the gallery was transformed into a magical cave. Hovering easily between art and design, Pardo's ravishing objects were both completely utilitarian and utterly unique.

But Pardo is back with a new and very different work at Petzel, May 8-June 19, 2010, a brightly lit, somewhat claustrophobic environment that almost completely fills the gallery. Viewers must thread their way through a maze of freestanding openwork screens, each two feet deep, eight feet wide and (usually) 14 feet long. An open latticework of MDF and vinyl, the structures look both organic and very much like they were made by a computer-assisted fabrication machine. The labyrinth turns adults into midgets trapped in a Brobdingnagian maze that also brings hospital equipment to mind.

Fashioned in a vaguely Art Nouveau pattern, the screens are dotted with round, built-in picture frames that hold a wealth of small images culled from the internet, forming a kind of free-association visual encyclopedia. The pasted-on photos are by turns terrifying, saccharine and banal. Child matadors with bulls, the late Princess Diana, potted plants and massacred corpses can be seen, along with spider webs, mushroom clouds, tropical fish and Castro smoking a cigar. There's even a perverse sandwich made from a tiny live puppy wedged between two halves of a roll.

Pardo's previous work has combined a retro tropical vibe with a futuristic utopian aura. This new configuration paradoxically imprisons divergent bits of chaos within a regimented system. The addition of non-decorative images may mark a new direction for Pardo, incorporating the visual traces of disorderly tragedy, farce and beauty into his carefully structured world of art, design and architecture.

**ELISABETH KLEY** is a New York artist and writer.



**Colette**  
*Light Sculpture, Maison de la  
Lumiere*  
2004  
Pavel Zoubok Gallery



**Colette**  
*Lumiere Series*  
1997-2000  
Pavel Zoubok Gallery



**Brent Green**  
*Gravity Was Everywhere Back  
Then*  
Installation view  
2010  
Andrew Edlin Gallery



**Brent Green**  
*Chair, Gravity Was Everywhere  
Back Then*  
2009  
Andrew Edlin Gallery



**Brent Green**  
*Gravity Was Everywhere Back Then* (video still)  
2010  
Andrew Edlin Gallery



Jorge Pardo's Project (2000) at the Dia Center for the Arts



Jorge Pardo at Friedrich Petzel Gallery, 2007, installation view



**Jorge Pardo**  
*Untitled*  
2010  
Friedrich Petzel Gallery



**Jorge Pardo**  
*Untitled*  
2010  
Friedrich Petzel Gallery

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