

NEW YORK

“Stranger Town” at Dinter Fine Art

The border between fine and commercial art is porous, with inspiration flowing in both directions, but the comparative reverence for art makes it a more difficult field to break into. “Stranger Town” emphasized this disparity with eight artists who command respect in fields such as music, illustration, and comics, but lack art-world renown. Youthful energy buzzed in mixed-media installations and several exuberantly displayed groups of drawings, featuring overarching themes of fantasy fulfillment and immediate gratification through emotional and physical purging.

The grittiest pieces on view stem from Japanese *manga*. Drawings by Mimiyo Tomozawa, best known in America for her album covers, depict fierce babies engaged in S/M and scatological play. Yusaku Hanakuma—whose *manga* books are so popular in Japan that one is being made into a full-length feature film, drew infantilized adults and disturbing fetishes.

The Clayton Brothers, known as illustrators and artists, explored the more innocent love between dog and owner via a grooming station that featured electric clippers, faded photos, veterinarian-prescribed meds, and meaty recipes, forming a sort of shrine to man’s best friend.

Musician Daniel Johnston showed eight colorful drawings of muscle-bound superheroes and other fantasy figures, done



Jason Holley, drawings and mixed-media sculptures, all 2004. Courtesy Dinter Fine Art.

with magic markers. The installation by Rich Jacobs, curator and ’zine publisher, included images of disembodied heads and swirling patterns, layered with souvenir ticket stubs and a touching message of encouragement from dad, written on a Post-It note.

Jason Holley presented a menagerie of imaginary creatures in two dozen small drawings and tiny mixed-media sculptures. And Saimon Chow, in three surreal col-

lages, combined enlarged prints of images clipped from magazines.

Tomoo Gokita’s eighty-two drawings in soft gray and velvety black ink and graphite on a variety of papers are perhaps the most traditional, but delightful. Inspired by many facets of popular culture, they depict everything from pinup girls and rock stars to tropical paradises.

—Lauren Ross