

A.I.R.

G A L L E R Y

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PRESS RELEASE

March 10 - March 28, 1998

Lynn Criswell: Double Edged Faces- paintings and constructions

Reception: March 14, Saturday, 6:00pm-8:00pm

Lynn Criswell's new work at the A.I.R. Gallery, Gallery II, demonstrates a skillful and elegant use of unusual materials. Using birch panels as her canvas, she combines oil paints, sheet lead, plaster, cast bronze and aluminum to create ironic statements about romance, relationships and growing up in the 1950's. The resulting works are an effective union of painting and assemblage.

Drawing on personal experience as the basis for her work, Criswell describes them as "essentially self-portraits that have become a series of personal mythologies." The collision of young girl's aesthetics with adult realities, lost innocence, and thwarted romantic expectations: these are the themes at work in Criswell's constructions. She explores them through the use of popular rhymes sung by girls jump roping or choosing "who's it" in the next hide - and-seek game. In some cases, the text used in her work such as '5 ways to feel at easy and to be comfortable at a dance' is taken from an assortment of 1945 encyclopedias.

Ms. Criswell uses these phrases in conjunction with poignant images of children, and in some cases' adults, to create a disturbing dialogue. The artist has manipulated and exposed the nasty innuendoes behind the phrases 'I Love Coffee, I love Tea, I Love The Boys And The Boys love Me,' and the counting ritual 'Eeny Meeny Miny Moe.'

Even though Criswell seems to expose the harsher side of adolescence and confronts romanticism with crass reality, she does face the dilemma of being born female head on with charming sentiment.