

### Judy Glantzman Reflection

I attended an artist talk by Judy Glantzman. Her main focus is painting and drawing, but she does do some sculpture as well. In her work she attempts to combine drawing and painting in order to give her paintings a drawn quality. She works from observation and mixes in some invention and abstraction. As far as content, she is interested in the space between a two-dimensional drawing and the three-dimensional object being observed. For instance, in a drawing she showed, she explained how the top third of the piece was drawn from observing the actual 3D objects and towards the bottom she created more abstracted representations from observing the original drawing at the top. She finds meaning in this space between opposing forces. Some of the pieces she presented were collages of old paintings and drawings combined with new work and actually became new pieces themselves. Again, the theme of opposing forces comes up, old and new, and this specific theme of old and new was mentioned in another piece. She showed a painting she did on a wall of an abandoned building, or it may have been an overpass. The structure no longer had a roof and so the sunlight could come in, and one of her friends sprinkled grass seed on the ground near her painting. This was again the contrast between the decay of a structure and new life of grass and artistic creation. She did not mention this, but I can see another idea of polarity in this piece, which is nature contrasted with synthesized materials and structures. Humans built that original structure, and without maintenance, it succumbed to the forces of nature. Because the original structure kept out the sunlight, it had prevented grass from growing. In the new piece, Judy gave new life to the structure, and her friend gave life to nature with the grass seed.

I definitely relate to these themes of contrasting elements and conditions because I draw on them for inspiration in my own work. I really enjoyed seeing how Judy experimented with these concepts. I think what I appreciated most about Judy's drawings, paintings, and collages is that I really got a sense of her process just by seeing the work. Through the fervent brushstrokes and obsessive mark-making, I could really feel the care put into each piece and empathize with how she was lost in the work. I know the feeling of losing time and really becoming entranced while working, which is what I felt when I looked at her work.

Judy lives and works in Rhode Island, and so she was very affected by the AIDS epidemic that was especially prevalent on the east coast in the 80's and 90's. She showed a photograph of a large number of her friends and colleagues and told us that several of the people were no longer alive, which I assumed was due to AIDS. The series of paintings she created during this period were the pieces I responded to the most. They were child-like figures whose disturbing faces and heads contrasted their feminine clothing. She explained that she had a fascination with the feet on these figures, and how it wasn't until later that she realized the reason. It was because when visiting many of her ill friends, she would see their bare feet. She described this as very personal. In my opinion, she was making a connection between seeing the bare feet and the vulnerability of her sick friends. They were so ill, they couldn't go anywhere but stay in bed. They completely relied on others to take care of them; they didn't need shoes.