

Flash Art

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E.V. DAY

THE WHITNEY MUSEUM AT PHILIP MORRIS HEADQUARTERS

The young artist E.V. Day is garnering a reputation for creating sculptural feminist manifestos from subverted popular culture phenomena: mummifying Barbie with fiberglass resin bandages; rigging an enormous, billowing mushroom

cloud from a tattered replica of Marilyn Monroe's iconic white dress from the film *The Seven Year Itch*. In the site-specific installation *G-Force*, Day's most recent endeavor installed in the Whitney Museum's lofty satellite sculpture court located at the tobacco and processed food mega-conglomerate Philip Morris' headquarters, the artist ponders the pervasive fad known as thong underwear. Approximately two hundred of these scanty panties have been stretched into sinister-looking winged shapes and suspended from the ceiling with monofilament. These rather remarkable unmentionables are configured to appear to be flying into the gallery space through a wall of floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking 42nd Street and the elegant neoclassical façade of Grand Central Station. Day's Top Gun g-strings soar, dip and roll overhead in boudoir camouflage — shades of black, white, and pink — schematic arrangements reminiscent of squadrons of stealthy fighter jet planes. The recent tragic terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers have added another layer of meaning to the work. However, current events aside, this isn't simply a "tongue in cheek" (thong in cheek, rather) attempt to create a visual gag with base materials. Instead, Day has successfully liberated the feminine form of these once body-constricting undergarments, transmuting a symbol of the objectified and fetishized into an aggressive yet elegant airforce.

G-Force is a 21st century woman's call to arms (and legs, and buttocks) and is also reminiscent of an extravagant, Depression-era fantasy dance sequence choreographed by Busby Berkely. The witty sophisticate Oscar Wilde, no stranger himself to examining and reinterpreting the minutiae of existence in order to extract the profound, once defined the aim of art as "to reveal art and conceal the artist." Sounds like he could have been referring to Day and her airborne arsenal of undulating underpants.

Charles G. Beyer