

E.V. Day, *G-Force*
Whitney Museum of American Art
at Philip Morris, through Jan 4
(see Museums).

Artist E.V. Day's use of the high-ceilinged, open space at the Whitney's midtown sculpture pavilion is sophisticated and ambitious. Strung up from the ceiling, her latest work, *G-Force*, features some 500 pairs of pink, white, blue and black panties, molded and seemingly shellacked into hard-edged shapes that resemble origami birds or paper airplanes. Dangling at various heights, they seem to mimic the flight patterns and swarms of winged things both man-made and natural.

Day's lyrical forms and innovative use of color in three dimensions recall the large-scale mobiles of Alexander Calder. Her thongs have been arranged, variously, into pairs, trios, V-shaped- or single-file formations, each playing off the others with remarkable grace. The slightly darker elastic lining on every item creates a painterly effect that is elegant and subtle. While skimpy ladies' underwear is often fetishized, Day makes it easy for audiences to set those

associations aside and focus on the sheer pleasure of looking.

Still, the medium has its message. Day isn't necessarily encouraging women to embrace some long-lost sexuality, yet her installation is liberating all the same because it is obviously fun-loving and joyful. Whether one believes that females in G-strings are a good or a bad thing, it's perfectly delightful to see undergarments so absurdly and beautifully out in public, fulfilling a decorative function. While impatient, hectic crowds move around the nearby Grand Central Terminal and angry cabdrivers honk their horns in standstill traffic, Day's multitude of undergarments hover above the heads of people who sit in the pavilion reading newspapers and drinking coffee. Day thus gives her audience a clear-cut choice: either stop and stare at her giddy sculptures and become the hapless prey of their lightheaded presence, or else go on with life as usual. In the stressed-out midtown hustle and bustle, *G-Force* is the exact thing that Manhattanites need: a dose of unbridled mirth.—*Sarah Valdez*



E.V. Day, *G-Force*, 2001.