



Despite its destructive methods, E.V. Day's art has definitively procreative concerns. Take the ecstatically arched back of the dress in *Black Bombshell*. As with her earlier dissected wetsuit sculptures, this black formal dress presents a means not so much of containing the body as of augmenting it, granting its wearer a super power, not to scale waves or tall buildings, but to determine the outcome of any prom night or cocktail party. Such an incredibly hulking force is enough to leave any outfit in tatters.

In *Anatomy of Hugh Hefner's Private Jet*, on view this past winter in P.S.1's "Greater New York" exhibition, the Playboy plane meets a similar fate. At the time of its design, this ultimate blend of pleasure and power rendered – in aluminum and steel – the dominant American reading of sex as biology. From its canal-like fuselage to its swollen, globular bulkheads, the symbolism is plain enough to make its blueprint labels (which include a "cockpit" at the front, though Hefner's private entrance in the rear) almost superfluous. Day takes this febrile biology to its logical conclusion, through a five-step process of division and recombination, reducing these shapes to their elemental forms. Instead of organs they become organelles, and as the jet's

membrane loses its shape in a mess of cytoplasm, mid-air collision

becomes mitosis. Petri dish porn: Day's work, like sex, is a

little bit science and a little bit fiction. To suggest

that the dress sculptures are mere meditations on

couture is to do them a disservice, as fashion is

only one of many conduits through which popular

culture extracts sexuality from biology and then

re-maps it onto the human form. Day's art thus

manages to address sex as both a biomechanical

and a socially mediated act, and in doing so

refers to what happens – a little bit of magic

called desire – when the two elements are

combined in the right proportion.

Craig Garrett

E.V. Day lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

