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## E.V. Day

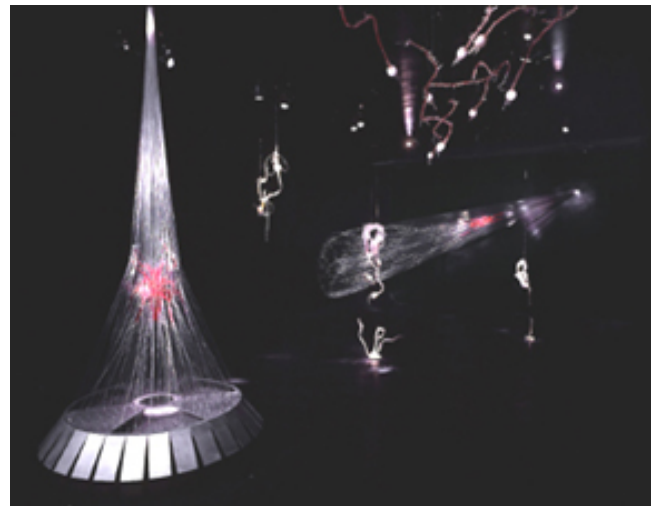
by Megan Heuer

### *Galaxy*

#### **Henry Urbach Architecture**

From modest pale pink silk tucked away in the "Intimates" department of Bloomingdale's to fetish leather and red lace in the window of Trash and Vaudeville, lingerie is ultimately nothing more than a support system, the fabricated foundation of the modern female form. Taking the material construction of sexy bodies literally, E.V. Day builds sculptures out of garter belts and panties, slyly using underpinnings to construct a sci-fi universe of erotic forms in her latest solo show *Galaxy*. But like a cheap thong or polyester imitating silk, Day's latest work irritates, struggling to create friction and never quite getting under the skin.

Day's *Galaxy* is composed of two large sculptural installations and several smaller pieces suspended from the ceiling, some hanging far overhead and others dangling close to the ground. With names like "G-Spot Gestation," "Reproductive Super Nova," and "Jock String Integration" (all 2003), red and white thongs are calcified in a clear goopy plastic, hardened into astronomical forms. The trouble is that these revolving moons of desire are stuck, too static in their oozy casing to really exude the kind of extraterrestrial pleasure they allude to. In the larger "Launch Pad" (2003), a red garter belt and thong combo is suspended in an architecturally impressive trapezoid of silvery wires that touches down on a solid silver base. Across the far corner of the gallery, the monumental "Red Streak" (2003) is composed of a leaning tower of monofilament— a giant ray of moonlight or a silvery spotlight— stretched diagonally from the ceiling to the floor with a red thong and garter belt caught, pinched in the center. A column of light with a passionate heart, "Red Streak" hangs on the tension between movement and stillness, freedom and capture, science fiction and romance. The suspension of pleasure, desire, and fetish in space, pulled taut in the structure it supports, is a rich metaphor, but ultimately enacted too literally.



E.V. Day, "Galaxy" (2003), Installation view. Courtesy of Henry Urbach Architecture.

Part of the tension in Day's previous work comes from putting intimates on public display. Hundreds of red panties strung up in a public atrium or the torn fragments of Marilyn Monroe's dress stretched into an exploded form within the bright white walls of a Whitney Biennial have a significant realism and a sense of materiality in the well-lit gallery. The Alien-like forms in *Galaxy*, frozen in mid-ooze and stilled in the suffocating theatrical heat of spotlights and black walls, trade the erotic publicity of Day's previous work for a weird, and rather insufferable, internal vocabulary of unconscious desire. In "G-Force" (2002), which was shown at the Whitney Altria last year, Day turned panties into birds, not hyper-sexualizing her materials, but rather merging sexuality with natural migratory patterns, making the material of fetish into a natural phenomenon (a phenomenon of nature akin to winged migration not merely bodily drives and subjective pleasure). With the heightened influence of Surrealism, Day's erotic sculpture becomes didactic, rather than allusive.

The intergalactic theme is a witty and intelligent extension of Day's previous allusions to the connection between sex and flight. There is "G-Force"'s simulation of winged migration with red and black thongs. There are also her Blueprint drawings in which she transforms Hugh Hefner's private jet into a feat of biological reproduction reminiscent of Matthew Barney's drawings and in-flight scenes in *Cremaster 1*. The connection is less explicit in Day's other new installation "Stealth" (2002-03), a fighter jet of green monofilament (which looks like thick fishing wire) positioned mid-air in a black-walled gallery, suspended by invisible vertical "columns" of clear monofilament and illuminated like a rave in campy black light. Like a cat's cradle, the plane emerges from the taut but tangled strings, displaying perfectly symmetrical geometric alignment. It's a drawing traced in space and the glowing green lines are seductive in their emptiness. The pop cultural representation of outer space is half about how we get there, but "Stealth" hardly seems like the vehicle to use to get to Day's *Galaxy* installed in the adjacent room. It is just as static as some of the alien forms, but unfortunately its nastiness is real and silently flying overhead.

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#### CONTRIBUTOR

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#### RECOMMENDED ARTICLES



## Every Force Evolves a Form

by Phong Bui

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Perhaps more than many of his peers from the late '60s through today, Richard Serra continues to explore his monumental anxiety through an inquiry of form, as much as remaining openly receptive to the art of the past and the art of his own time, especially regarding potential expansions from the language of post-Minimalism.