



sarah bowen gallery
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Karyn Lyons

"i think i love you"

December 2, 2005 — January 8, 2006

Reception: Friday, December 2, 2005

7 – 9 P.M.

Sarah Bowen Gallery presents the debut solo show of photo-realist painter **Karyn Lyons**, titled "i think i love you". Lyons' professional career as an art director in the high-end fashion industry informs her aesthetic sensibilities in her fine art; a single model—perfectly styled in her retro couture—is posed to reorder the possibilities of portraiture and modern femininity. Her images of the lone female are accompanied by select images of nature, which allow her work to emerge into a full narrative that is both alluring and quietly dramatic. The woman is always pictured alone, but we sense that she embodies various moments surrounding an encounter, which accentuates a feeling of conflict and loss; the beautiful facade betrays an inner torment.

Alongside these portraits are images of apple trees, their branches shadowy though heavy with fruit, bright and luscious. The fruit offers an array of connotations: signifying objects of desire, contemplative moments of nature, and for the artist, choice and decision. Aside from the most obvious symbols of temptation, they can also be considered as residual objects, ripened fruit preserved in autumn's decay.

Though her work is informed by her fashion resume as well as her personal life (she works from photographs that she takes in her Connecticut hometown, dressing her model in clothing from her mother's wardrobe from the 1970's), the underlying mood cutting into her work evokes the sensibility of Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm*, also set in Connecticut. And the painting, "Tornado 1", seems to be the vortex in which she sets her stage, as Lyons has painted one of the least violent (yet most alluring) twisters ever manifested. Seen as a whole, the paintings—like frames from a film—create a bleak realist narrative of what lurks just below the surface. Their various potential narratives and context are brilliantly inscribed, particularly the coveted, yet self-conscious and insecure world of American Royalty—played out in real life tragedies like Jacqueline Kennedy or fabricated narratives such as *The Great Gatsby* or *The Royal Tennenbaums*.

"i think i love you" will be accommodated with a catalogue, which includes an essay written by George Ferrandi. As Ferrandi writes in the essay, "As spectators...we're quieted by this kind of swollen energy, this sadness worn so close to the surface... There is a compelling power in it. That is the power of Karyn Lyons' work."

sarah bowen gallery is open **Wednesday through Sunday, 11 am – 7 pm** and by appointment. The gallery is located at 210 North Sixth Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY, 11211. Directions: L Train to Bedford Avenue stop, take Driggs exit, walk one block south to Sixth Street, and then 1/2 block East. The gallery is located between Driggs and Roebling on the right hand side.