

WANROOIJ GALLERY

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

Collected works by Anna Tas

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Writing about her preference for listening to others respond to her work rather than directing a viewer to a certain interpretation, Anna Tas says that "I enjoy the dialogue that comes from a viewer who is seeing the work from their point of view, rather than mine, someone who has no preconceived idea of what it is that I am trying to talk about." This is a refreshing approach in a contemporary art world that often seems to prize work that denies dialogue with the viewer, either through explicit strategies of exclusion or through a didactic approach that dictates a particular, often political, interpretation of the artwork. In her new series, *Impossible Goddesses* (2014), Tas offers an immediately identifiable lens through which to view the work – that of gender and ideals of female beauty – while at the same time hinting at other possible viewing strategies and interpretive channels, such as the history of art, ideas of mutability and change and mass-produced consumer culture.

In these images, the classic Barbie doll is posed against a simple grey background, draped in white tulle and dramatically lit to emphasize her curves and features. At first glance, particularly at the photographs of *Impossible Goddesses* #1 and #2, the viewer is confronted with an idealized form of female beauty rendered in molded plastic and given a grace and gravity through Tas' presentation. Debates about the role Barbie plays in creating gendered stereotypes of unobtainable female perfection are well-rehearsed in contemporary discourse and Tas' photographs nod to those dialogues. Look more closely, however, and you see that the dolls in these images, and even more explicitly in *Goddesses* #3 and #4, are posed to mimic older ideals of feminine beauty in Western culture: Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, a Renaissance *Virgin Mary*, the *Nike of Samothrace* and the *Venus de Milo*. Tas even mutilates the dolls to achieve a fidelity to the original models. In this way, the artist adds an interpretive layer to the images, connecting the debates about Barbie's social role to a larger examination of historical and cultural constructions of beauty. The use of the lenticular technique, though less pronounced here than in earlier series, provides a slight movement to the figures, perhaps reminding us of the changeable nature of our conceptions of beauty and perfection. And the use of cheap, mass-produced dolls in the photographs draws our attention to the commodification of beauty in advertising, mass media and entertainment.

In an earlier series, *A Thing of Beauty* (2013), Tas also references ideals of beauty and the many ways in which we construct and interpret that notion. These photographs, like the *Impossible Goddesses*, leave themselves open to a range of readings. However the use of the lenticular process to achieve a full transformation in each image from butterfly to folded currency may be seen to highlight the constant link between beauty and commerce in contemporary culture – beauty is what we are sold, not just as we behold.

Throughout the entire portfolio, from *The Tipping Point* (2008), her earliest exploration of the lenticular process, through *Chromopathic* (2011), *Trinity* (2012) and *A Thing of Beauty* (2013), we see Tas exploit how the medium allows the image to transform. These visual shifts in the image – be they a total metamorphosis or a delicate alteration of features – are initiated by the viewer physically interacting with the piece, and in that instant, allow a moment of connection and interpretation. Although the themes throughout the body of work may be subtle, each series offers us, in that moment of interaction, the opportunity to question what we are really seeing, to interpret what it means, and in this way, Tas offers us the control of her creation, providing, “...the ambiguity of meaning, which allows it to work on different levels for different people.”

Sabrina DeTurk, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, College of Arts and Creative Enterprises, Zayed University, Dubai, United Arab Emirates



Impossible Goddess #3

2014, 35" x 47", edition of 10

Archival pigment print with 3D lenticular lens

Impossible Goddess #1
2014, 17" x 23", edition of 10
Archival pigment print with 3D
lenticular lens



Impossible Goddess #2
2014, 17" x 23", edition of 10
Archival pigment print with 3D
lenticular lens





*A Thing Of Beauty #1 (Morpho); #2 (Cymothoe);
#3 (Phoebis); #6 (Graphium);
#7 (Charaxes); #9 (Salamis)*



A Thing Of Beauty #10 (Catopsilia)

2014, 36" x 36", edition of 10

Archival pigment print with lenticular lens



Children Of Men (Son of Man)

2011, 36" x 48", edition of 10

Archival pigment print with 3D lenticular lens



Children Of Men (Daughter of Man)

2011, 36" x 48", edition of 10

Archival pigment print with 3D lenticular lens



Chromopathic

Chromopathic is a customisable series of work, each lenticular image created by using a combination of the colours, based on the viewers personal responses.

Archival pigment print with lenticular lens





The Tipping Point #1 (Simon/Ruth)



The Tipping Point #2 (Natalie/Patricia)



The Tipping Point #3 (Crystal/Michael)



The Tipping Point #4 (Chuck/Francois)

Each piece 2008, 36" x 48", edition of 10
Archival pigment print with lenticular lens

**The Tipping Point Special
Edition I (Natalie/Jill)**

2010, 36" x 48", edition of 10
Archival pigment print with
lenticular lens



**The Tipping Point Special
Edition II (Simon/Norrin)**

2010, 36" x 48", edition of 10
Archival pigment print with
lenticular lens





Trinity - parts I, II & III

Set of three images combine into one lenticular image that transitions between the characters. 2012, 36" x 48", edition of 10, Archival pigment print with lenticular lens

About the artist

Anna Tas is a British born artist, who has been the recipient of many awards and has exhibited both nationally and internationally. She has lived in London, Amsterdam and currently resides in Philadelphia.

Anna's work has been described as subtle, with an ambiguity of meaning - working on different levels for different people. Anna believes that how we interpret what we see and how we learn to decode images is just as much a reflection on ourselves as the work itself, and sees her work really as a starting point for discussion, not passing judgement, but allowing us space to consider.

Anna's work is held in private collections around the world, including London, Amsterdam, Rome, Hong Kong, New York and Dehli, as well as in public collections, most notably The Please Touch Museum in Philadelphia.

www.annatas.com

Selected News/Press/Events

ROAR, June 2014, Silicon Fine Art Prints, Philadelphia.

SCOPE BASEL, June 2014, Basel, Switzerland.

Masters of LXRY, 12 - 16 December 2013, Amsterdam.

SCOPE MIAMI BEACH, December 2013, Miami, FL.

Realisme, January 2012 - Passenger Terminal Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Artist Spotlight lecture, June 2011 - lecture, Fleisher Art Memorial, Philadelphia, US

Trickery, May 2011 - Paradigm Gallery, Philadelphia, US

Tableau Fine Arts Magazine, September/October 2010, featured in gallery article.

Spectacle Obscura, October 2010 - Bambi Gallery, Philadelphia, US

The 47th SPE Conference & Silicon Gallery Photography Competition, March 2010 - Silicon Gallery, Philadelphia, US

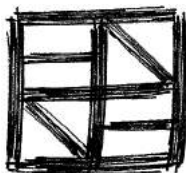
AAF Brussels 2010, February 2010 - Brussels, Belgium (featured on Tele Matin, France)

Pretty Pretty, November 2008 - Bambi Gallery, Philadelphia, US

Factory of Photography, May 2008 – International group show in Lodz, Poland

PDN Photo Annual, May 2008 – winner, published in May 2008 Annual issue under “Personal work” category

Homeland: Borders and Boundaries, November 2007 – juried show of SPEMA at International Centre for Photography, Woodstock NY, US



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ACCLAIMED AND EMERGING ARTISTS

Stadhouderskade 41, 1071 ZD Amsterdam, The Netherlands

T. +31 (0)20 737 17 41 M. +31 (0)6 457 00 280

info@wanrooijgallery.com

www.wanrooijgallery.com