



Dominique Albertelli
Dominique Albertelli
Galerie Charlot
47 rue Charlot , Paris, 75003, France
September 6, 2011 - October 15, 2011

Drawings by Robert J. Hughes

"The star has wept rose in your ears," begins a poem of that name by Rimbaud – slightly sinister in its acute tenderness, as if to feel, to sense, to be were to hurt. The drawings of the French artist Dominique Albertelli have a similar delicate brutality, evoking the ruptures between people who exist in a world they try to recognize while failing to communicate with each other. It's so difficult to remain true to whatever you think it is you are while trying to figure out whatever it is that's going on around you.

A show of Albertelli's new works, at Galerie Charlot in Paris through October 16, shows her concern with attitude – not posturing, but regarding: the self, the world, the other. Her line is light and fluid and conveys real motion while her palette, rather dark, casts a shadow on these often-solitary figures.

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The drawings seem like cave paintings of a sort: sophisticated in a way that's surprising given the poses of the women (and the occasional man) Albertelli depicts crouching, squatting, leaning, contorting. They have a two-dimensionality that somehow also conveys depth, as if they were painted on undulating grotto walls and the surface of the rock gave them inadvertent substance.

These are mainly drawings of women. One, *History of Woman*, shows three figures with nude torsos, wearing high heels and blue trousers, standing in a line looking ahead and behind at each other and beyond each other. The figures have an androgynous puzzlement, a "how did I get here" affect and at the same time a sort of calm (such is the lot of women).



Another design, untitled, shows a reclining figure in dotted bikini briefs, another nude torso, a Neolithic Modigliani that could have been transported from the Lascaux caverns, contemplative, quiet, strong, mysterious. An untitled drawing of a squatting woman – who seems to be perched on an envelope – has an awkward grace; Albertelli paints the woman's blouse as an extension of her outward-inward gaze, a mix of muted colors and smoky lines, movement and stillness.

These drawings have sensuality, but almost at a remove, as if the figures are regarding what they're made of, and what might be the possibilities of their corporeality, the allure of the erotic and the fear of physicality, the hope for engagement and the wariness of being taken.

As another Rimbaud poem begins: "Clear water, like the salt in a child's tears, the assault of the sun on the bleached skin of women's bodies...frolicking angels." The drawings of Dominique Albertelli are passionate, sometimes ecstatic and always frank, naïve in a deliberate way, a nod toward primitive feelings and the dawning sophistication of complicated emotions.

~[Robert J. Hughes](#), a writer living in Paris.

(Images: **Dominique Albertelli**, *Histoire de femme (détail)*, 600 x 150 cm, Pastel gras sur papier; 50 x 65 cm, Technique mixte; 50 x 65 cm, Encre et Pastel sur papier; Courtesy Galerie Charlot)

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