

## Solo Exhibitions

- 2007 *Babies from Heaven, People in Hell*, Abaton Garage, Jersey City, NJ  
2005 *Something Old, Something New*, Abaton Garage, Jersey City, NJ  
1987 Photography Exhibition, University of Science, Penang, Malaysia

## Group Exhibitions

- 2006 *Aus Amerika II*, Galerie Lichtblick, Cologne, Germany  
2006 ICP Faculty Show, International Center for Photography, NYC  
2006 *Images Against War*, Galerie Lichtblick, Cologne, Germany  
2006 *Transformation: Photography of the 21st Century*, Center for the Living Arts, Mobile, AL  
2005 *Saratoga Inside-Out*, Arts Center Gallery, Saratoga Springs, NY.  
2005 *7 Internationalen Fototage*, Mannheim, Germany  
2005 *Red*, Mark Woolley Gallery, Portland, OR  
2004 *Censored*, The New Yorker Gallery, NYC  
2003 *Handle's Nightstand - The Seduction of Discontinuity*, The New Yorker Gallery, NYC  
1999-2002 Annual Member Show, Greenwich Street Pottery, NYC  
1996 *On the Street/Off the Street*, Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, MD  
1993-1997 Franklin Street Potters, ongoing display gallery/shop, NYC  
1989 *Five Women Photographers*, Towson State University, Towson, MD  
1986 *Password*, State of Illinois Gallery, Chicago, IL  
1986 *Postism*, Bedrock Gallery, Chicago, IL  
1985 *Broadsides and Broken English*, Bedrock Gallery, Chicago, IL  
1984 *Sexuality in Art and the Media*, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL  
1984 Women Fine Arts Photographers International Exhibition, Eight St. Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
1983 *1-800 Glamour*, Book Space gallery, Chicago, IL  
1981-82 Faculty Show, Mercer County Community College, Trenton, NJ  
1981 Third New Jersey Biennial, Newark Museum, Newark, NJ  
1980 *Two Women*, School #33 Gallery, Baltimore, MD  
1979 *Polaroids and Paintings*, Fells Point Gallery, Baltimore, MD

## Awards

- 1986-87 Fulbright Grant, Malaysia. Grant to photograph Malaysian religious festivals and culture  
1985 Traveling Fellowship, School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
1980 Maryland Arts Council Grant

## Education

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, MFA, Photography.  
Maryland Institute, College of Art, BFA, Fine Art & Photography.

## *Abaton Garage*

100 Gifford Avenue, Jersey City, NJ  
abatontbookcompany@comcast.net  
www.abatongarage.com

# *Babies from Heaven, People In Hell*

Recent paintings by Paula Gillen

July 8 ~ August 9, 2007

## *Babies from Heaven, People in Hell*

In this recent series of work, Paula Gillen departs from the medium with which she's best acquainted—photography—and ventures back into the world of painting, former stomping grounds for the onetime practitioner of graffiti art. Ms. Gillen, who received a BFA from the Maryland Institute in 1978 and an MFA from Chicago's Art Institute in 1984, participated in the urban culture of both Baltimore and the Windy City, tagging each metropolis with her signature pony-tailed teenybopper, among other things, meanwhile engaging in public performance of various sorts, capturing it all on camera for posterity.

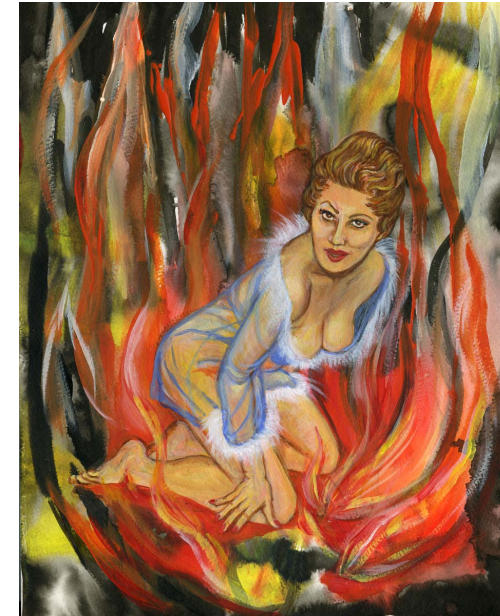
Post graduation Gillen was awarded a Fulbright grant to Malaysia, where she spent a year photographing Buddhist, Islamic and Hindu rituals. After returning to the U.S and settling down in New York City, Gillen began a career in photo research, working for noted publications such as *Time*, *Business Week*, and *Vanity Fair*, eventually taking on an editing position at *The New Yorker*. Concurrently, Ms. Gillen pursued photography as a form of creative expression, exhibiting her work at fine art galleries and teaching her unique photo-collage techniques at Manhattan's ICP. Gillen's digital collages will soon be displayed at The Griffin Museum in Massachusetts.

Having reached numerous pinnacles of success as a photographer, Gillen decided to take on other artistic challenges and, in the process, rediscovered a long-neglected knack for painting. In *Babies from Heaven* and *People in Hell*, she revisits her creative roots, cultivating them without erasing all wild abandon. Gillen's careful yet carefree delivery reads as a sort of outsider art from the inner sanctum.

*People in Hell* are, needless to say, engaged in a bevy of sins, none of them particularly original, but then that's obviously the point. To err is human and in capturing her subjects non-judgmentally, an element of forgiveness is implied, vestiges, perhaps, of Gillen's Catholic upbringing. The undertaking of such a dire topic with equal measures of humor and angst suggests the influence of German Expressionism, as does the murky application of paint, but Gillen's field is leveled by repeat allusions to the popular graphics of commercial art, alongside references to timeless, priceless treasure.



*Flying Baby*



*Robin Bliss*



*Japanese Mom with Big Baby*



*Indian Pop Star*



*Businessman in Hell*

With a Hell's-eye view, Gillen reflects on the worldwide favorite pastime of Hollywood stargazing. The glitter-dusted twin orbs of Anna Nicole (which is which?) act as a stand-in for our humbled constellations. One heavenly body serves as well as the next, when wishing upon a star takes on new meaning. Politics are another hot dish on Gillen's tray. A wide-eyed President George Bush II attempts to comfort a bawling babe amidst the underworld's ferocious flames. Both would no doubt prefer to be snuggling cozily on daddy's lap.

In the eons-old debate over which came first—chicken or egg, George Bush or George Bush—Gillen's cherubim spring into play. These blissful, bouncing newborns might at first appear to stand, rather, lie in opposition to their Hell-ridden counterparts, yet at second glance it becomes quite clear that each reflects a rebirth of the other, all striking milestones in a seemingly endless cycle.

*Babies from Heaven* emerge, through the usual portal, from a psychedelic primordial ooze, into an assortment of times and places: 14<sup>th</sup>-century Italy, 18<sup>th</sup>-century Japan, 20<sup>th</sup>-century Spain, 21<sup>st</sup>-century America, bringing with them the wisdom of the ages. How long, one can't help but wonder, until this knowledge dissipates—minutes, hours, days, weeks, months? Within a year, two at most, it will certainly have vanished, or dwindled to all but naught, to be touched upon later, perhaps, on occasion. Paula Gillen has birthed such an occasion here and now.

*Lauri Bortz, 2007*



*Couple on Vacation*



*Breast Bliss*



*Socialite in Hell*