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ANN CRAVEN

by Barbara Pollack

Ann Craven

Maccarone

Ann Craven is unafraid of sentimentality; she brazenly fills her shows with pretty paintings of deer, parakeets, flowers, and moons. All are based on images found on

tricks here. The show was divided evenly into two rooms, with each set of nine paintings almost the mirror image of the other. But the works in the second space were lusciously bad, packed with accidents of scale and perspective, aggressively assembled with the vigor of an artist in a hurry to see her ideas come to fruition.

It was mandatory for viewers to go back and forth between the rooms, comparing the versions in order to appreciate Craven's maddening talent for reproduction. Rather than demonstrating pure trickery, this show packed an emotional wallop, making the subject of death doubly inescapable.

—Barbara Pollack



Ann Craven, *Roses (Picabia Bird #2)*, 2010, oil on linen, 60" x 48".
Maccarone.

the Internet, which the artist then renders in a pastel palette with a loaded brush, transforming Hallmark-style treatise into vibrant, expressive pictures on canvas. There is another conceptual twist to her work as well. Craven repeatedly replicates her paintings—transferring seemingly spontaneous gestures from one piece to another.

Bouquets of white roses were the focus of every one of the 18 paintings in this strikingly melancholic show. Inspired by funeral arrangements, the works in the series all feature flowers standing in a glass vase atop a studio stool. Each bouquet, in shades of black and white, is set off against a shadowy background, which turns out to be a blurred grayscale version of one of Craven's previous flower paintings—themselves homages to Georgia O'Keeffe. The roses in the vase pop out against the more somber floral designs on the wall, whose white slashes represent petals and black marks stand in for leaves.

But there was more in Craven's bag of