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NEVA MIKULICZ DRAWING/MIXED MEDIA EXHIBITION;

A Blast from the past and other Drawings

Houston-based artist Neva Mikulicz will have an exhibition of eight new drawings at the Anya Tish Gallery beginning October 20, 2006. The eight works are large drawings executed in pencil on paper in a hyperrealistic style made up of tens of thousands of tiny hard graphite pencil marks. Five of the works will utilize additional media, including LED lights, light projection, sound recordings and vintage television imagery played on a DVD. The sources of the imagery are always photographs, either snap shots from Mikulicz's childhood during the 1950s and early 60s, snapshots she has purchased at yard sales or in second hand shops and archival on-line images she has downloaded.

Mikulicz has exhibited at the Anya Tish Gallery several times in the past decade since she left a teaching position at the University of Houston-Clear Lake to pursue a career as an artist and graphic designer. The basis of her artwork is always astonishingly detailed pencil drawings. At an exhibition of Houston artists held in Shanghai, China earlier this year, a Chinese reviewer felt it important to note that her large drawing of a stegosaurus had resulted in "seventy-two broken pencils." She has used a series of drawings as a basis for an animated alphabet that she released on DVD two years ago. More recently, a drawing of a school bus being shadowed by a huge flying saucer was equipped with a button that, when pressed, played an audio loop of screaming children.

The current exhibition takes the use of additional media further. An image of two soldiers in the Nevada desert observing a test explosion of an atomic bomb that occurred in 1951 will be equipped with LED lights that will suggest the actual play of colors over a fission bomb blast. A

photo-into-drawing showing a carnival in her father's hometown in the Pennsylvania coal country in the summer of 1949 will have light projected onto it so that the "day" will turn into night. Another image of two forlorn accordionists in a tent somewhere on the front during the Korean War entertaining soldiers will be accompanied by recorded polka music. A childhood snapshot of the artist and her father in front of the television set will have an inserted screen playing a DVD of vintage programming.

Mikulicz's *oeuvre* features baby boomer images that celebrate the obscure and the forgotten individuals of the era rather than pop personalities or historical figures. When history does intrude, it is in the form of a Cold War era child's dread and anxiety; the background emotion to most children's interest, often forced, in the science of the day – nuclear explosions, radiation, monstrous dinosaur skeletons, vast areas of the landscape laid waste by mining, forestry and manufacturing.

The artist will be present at the exhibition's opening reception, Friday, October 20, from 6:00 P.M. until 9:00 P.M. The exhibition will be on display through November 27, 2006. The gallery's regular hours are 10:30 AM until 6:00 PM Tuesdays through Fridays and from 10:30 AM until 5:00 PM on Saturdays.