

Media Contact: Jess Park
202.232.4788
jess_park@longviewgallery.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 12, 2010

Long View Gallery Presents “The Dance before the Kill,” Anna U. Davis’
Inaugural Exhibition of Drawings



The Vitruvian Woman, Ink on paper, 30x44

June 3 – July 1, 2010
Opening Reception: June 3, 6:30-9:30pm
Food and beverages provided by Susan Gage Caterers

WASHINGTON, DC – Long View Gallery is pleased to announce “The Dance before the Kill,” featuring approximately thirty pen and ink drawings by Washington-based artist Anna U. Davis. This exhibition marks the first time that Davis has shown works on paper. The artist views her exploration of a new medium as an exciting, personal challenge: “You have to think differently when you draw than you do when you paint. Both processes are detail-oriented; but, for me, drawing is a lot more about developing the figures and manipulating the negative space in an interesting way.”



part gallery. part event space. all art.

1234 ninth st nw | washington, dc 20001 | 202.232.4788 | longviewgallery.com

Media Contact: Jess Park
202.232.4788
jess_park@longviewgallery.com

In “The Dance before the Kill,” Davis continues her investigation of contemporary feminist concerns, this time giving form to the sexually charged hostilities that pervade both gender and race relations. Her new series adopts the pasodoble as a metaphor to contrast the fluidity of women’s roles with the aggressive, prideful posturing of paternal authority. Davis has translated the gray *Frocasian* characters of her celebrated, vibrant mixed media paintings into starkly black and white illustrations of entangled bodies. An amalgam of the terms *Afro* and *Caucasian*, *Frocasian* designates the artist’s construal of Primitivism’s *noble savage* and symbolizes the utopist aim to transcend identity politics. On paper, however, these figures lose their uniformly gray hue, underscoring their cultural oppositions and differences in appearance. The distinct, flamboyant garb and histrionic facial expression of each character evoke the dance of the bullfight, as these attributes augment the dramatic tension between the sexes. Davis, nevertheless, conveys the tenet of social parity through the symmetrical balance of her compositions. She defines feminism as the recognition of all persons as social equals without diminishing what differentiates one gender from another.

One of the drawings in “The Dance before the Kill” parodies Leonardo da Vinci’s “Vitruvian Man”: Davis supplants the ideal male figure with the female form, critiquing the societal injunction that commands women to achieve “perfect” bodily proportions. Imparting the passion of the pasodoble, a swarm of frenzied men in their underwear envelops the central female character. Vying for the woman’s attention, the male figures pull on and stretch out her limbs, suggesting that feminine subjectivities are based on the needs of men. Moreover, the close-knit arrangement of the figures prompts the viewer to examine the libidinal underside of social antagonism.

“I begin each drawing by sketching out something that bothers me, and I end up making something that makes me feel good,” Davis explains. “My feminist stance comes out naturally in my work. All of the women represent different sides of me.”

About the Artist

“The Dance before the Kill” is Anna U. Davis’ first solo show and the second time that she has exhibited at Long View Gallery. Davis is a 2006 recipient of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Young Artist Grant. Her work has been exhibited at numerous venues throughout the Washington metro area and is also in the private collection of Dorothy Lichtenstein. She earned her BA in Studio Art from the University of the District of Columbia in 2002. Born in Sweden, Davis moved to the United States in 1998 and currently resides and works in Washington, DC.

About the Gallery

Reopened in October 2009 as an art and event space, Long View Gallery concurrently highlights the talent of Washington-based artists and operates as a premiere venue for private functions. The gallery mostly exhibits contemporary figural painting by both mid-career and emerging artists, but has recently launched a corporate art consultancy branch whose diverse portfolio runs the gamut of abstract sculpture to photography. Long View Gallery additionally offers design consultations to both individual and corporate clients, as well as an in-house custom framing service. In summer 2010, the gallery will unveil an outdoor sculpture courtyard that faces historic Blagden Alley. Business hours are Wednesdays to Saturdays, 11am-6pm; Sundays, 12pm-5pm; and by appointment.

Gallery Contact

Drew Porterfield, Gallery Director
drew_porterfield@longviewgallery.com

