

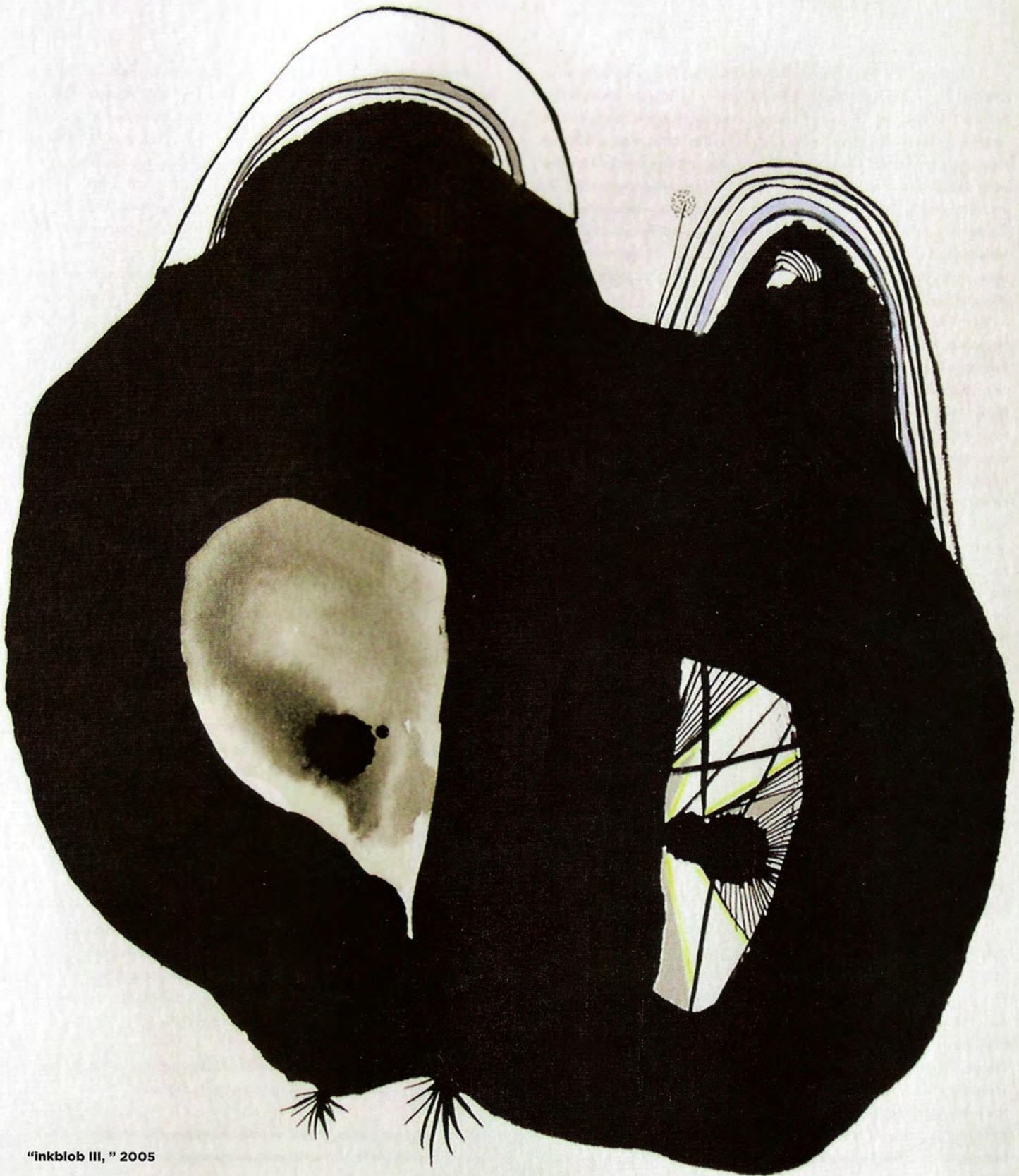
A HOY THERE

WRITTEN BY **CHRISTOPHER MILES**

ANNA SEW HOY'S ART MOVES BETWEEN ANCIENT AND CONTEMPORARY
WITH THE HELP OF JUNK HEAPS, HOBBY SHOPS, AND HOME DEPOT.
NOW THAT'S FINE ART.



"inkblob II," 2005



"inkblob III," 2005

Anna Sew Hoy is on the move. She's in the midst of curating a show for Champion Fine Art called "Kicking Rocks," part of a two-year series of exhibitions that began in New York and not long ago jumped coasts to Los Angeles. She's getting her own work ready for a three-artist show at Midway Contemporary Art, an alternative exhibition space in Minneapolis. Her new work also is included in "Sugar Town" a New York gallery's answer, with L.A. art, to "Greater New York," currently on view at PS1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City. And before the summer is done, in a loft somewhere in Oslo, the exhibition "With Us Against Reality, or Against Us!" will open, with work by Sew Hoy and other artists, including dearraindrop, Slava Mogutin, and Olaf Breuning.

But Anna Sew Hoy, 29, is more than busy. She is on the move, not just juggling a schedule of exhibitions, but drifting and jumping, weaving and blurring between what used to be disparate terrain on the cultural map. Born into a thoroughly post-modern world—late enough to have come of age in a contemporary art climate less defined by factional power squabbles over the crown that modernism lost, than by the actualizing of newfound cross-over freedom perhaps more aptly described as post-hip-hop—Sew Hoy is an artist who flexes her freedom in her art.

Originally from New Zealand, educated in New York at the School of Visual Arts, as well as Hunter College, and now calling New York and Los Angeles her bicoastal home bases, Sew Hoy is as likely to engage in Ikebana (the Japanese tradition of flower arranging) as she is in the American (or more likely universal) pastime of beer can stacking. Obvious influences in her work range from punk rock and disco to Zen gardens and scholar's rocks to *Star Wars*, graffiti, minimalist sculpture, and modernist furniture. Her materials come from places like the junk heap to the hobby shop to Home Depot to the fragrance counter (many of her sculptures come spritzed with their own special scents and incorporate the bottles) to the jewelry mall for the dashes of flash and bits of bling that become the finishing touches on her works. And her methods range from wood-burning to collaging and stickering to macramé and hand-forming clay.

Among the artist's most recent sculptures are "lychee," a chunk of eucalyptus with what the artist terms "worms" (trails of paint from the tube) wound around rotted portions of the wood, and a formica cube cut away to reveal perfume bottles and sweaters tucked inside. This odd organic/geometric mass, covered with stickers, rests atop five cans of lychees. The work "hybrid" includes slices of pine logs and ceramic dreamcatchers that the artist handfashions, while the main work Sew Hoy has planned for Minneapolis consists of a tree constructed from two-by-fours with more dreamcatchers hanging from it.

Imagine an artist moving constantly between ancient and contemporary, Eastern and Western (whether we're talking coasts or continents), high and low, and traditional and new. As she goes, she drags traces of each neighborhood through the next, creating works of art that, in the end, seem like jumbles of where they've been, pointing to everywhere while remaining unclear as to their own point of origin.

If there is such a point, it exists not on a map, but at some amazing hub of activity where pathways to transcendence, red carpets, runways, nature hikes, gutters, movie lines, velvet ropes, dime-store aisles, trading routes, smoke trails, and rainbows all intersect in Anna Sew Hoy's mind.

Kicking Rocks curated by Anna Sew Hoy, including work by Kelly Breslin, Mer Danluck, Alice Konitz, Michelle Lopez, Katie Grimman, Skylar Haskgaard, and Jeff Ono, opens June 30 at Champion Fine Art, 6073 Comey Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90034 www.championfineart.org (323) 857-0295

Diamond Hand Grenade opens July 9 at Midway Contemporary Art, 3338 University Avenue SE #400, Minneapolis, MN 55414 www.midwayart.org (612) 605-4504.

Sugar Town opens June 24 at Elizabeth Dee Gallery, 545 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011 www.elizabethdeegallery.com (212) 924-7545

"lychee," 2005, eucalyptus, formica, and chipboard cube, canned lychees, stickers, knitted sweaters, various perfume bottles, acrylic paint, 36" x 27" x 30".





"calm day," 2003