

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

NANCY CHUNN: *Chicken Little and the Culture of Fear*

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts • 31 Mercer St NYC • September 10 – December 17, 2016

I will exhibit my 13 1/2 year, site-specific painting-installation *Chicken Little and the Culture of Fear*, updating the folk tale of the paranoid fowl. After 9/11, the media went into overdrive, broadcasting every idiotic, innocuous, hilarious, and (only on rare occasions) poignant dangers. In Michael Moore's *Bowling For Columbine*, Professor Barry Glassner referred to this pathology as a "Culture of Fear" that flooded the public with stories about immigrants, welfare mothers, kidnappings, etc. Listening to all this crap, and not being Jon Stewart, I decided the only way to maintain any sanity in this age of absurdity was to embark on a baroque, obsessive, labor intensive process that has become as insane as the content.

The story follows Chicken Little from her *Garden*, where she's struck on the head by a falling TV, through her *Bathroom*, *Kitchen*, and *Bedroom*, where she's arrested for removing her mattress tag, landing her in *Jail* beside the dregs of society. Her friends bail her out and they crash on the *Road*, landing them in the *ER* and *Main Hospital*. Due to subpar hospital food, they rush to the *Diner*, and mingle with the general public. On their way to see the king, they pass through the loss and devastation of *Poortown*. In the folk tale, Chicken Little either reaches the king who sends them away with an umbrella—or they never reach the king and instead are lured into a fox's den and are eaten up. In my retelling, they are consumed by Fox News, where Chicken Little becomes one of the leggy blonde anchorwomen.

The eleven walls contain hundreds of canvases bound by eleven aesthetically pleasing, painted amoeba shapes. Each details a specific category of fears and dangers: Garden = the environment; Bathroom = household; Kitchen = food; Bedroom = chicken childhood nightmares; Road = road rage; ER/Main Hospital = health care; Diner = wedge issues; Poortown = the great recession; Fox News = self-explanatory.

Statistics:

- 11 gallery walls holding 511 canvases painted with Lascaux acrylic (the most expensive acrylic)
- dozens and dozens of Lascaux brushes that were too beautiful to use. Instead I used loads of slightly less beautiful Raphael 8404 2/0 and 3/0 for line work and small areas
- 6 rolls of frisket film, which were unsatisfactory, followed by 40 bottles of *Incredible White Mask* liquid frisket and hundreds of Windsor Newton University series 233, 0 and 00, for painting it on
- several jugs of Enhance (a clear-coat protection for giclee prints) followed by ClearShield (which may have been better, or may have been the same product)
- 3,000+ colors mixed with CMYK formulas (although some cheating tolerated on occasion)
- 68 giclee prints
- eleven 3-D printed sculptures (3 bricks, 1 bank, 1 drone, 1 pill bottle, 3 pills, 1 pack of Marlboro, 1 Coke can)
- 3 grants (Anonymous Was a Woman, Jennifer Howard Coleman Distinguished Lectureship and Residency, The Guggenheim) + 2 NEAs received earlier
- 3 assistants (Tom Jezek 2000 - 2015, David McDevitt 2007 - present, Michael Caudo 2015 - present)
- 1 customized catalogue database for CMYK colors and formulas, conceived and programmed by Mark Rosen (one year)
- 7 Epson 880 inkjet printers and 1 horrible Canon MG6220, which of course takes different ink than the old 880s
- 2 styles of basic Staples-brand printer paper (the first was discontinued, the second was whiter and brighter, creating havoc with the color-mixing process)
- 10 banker boxes containing 511 color-coded manila folders filled with crib sheets, swatch sheets, and research material
- 5 Apple computers
- Amount of dollars, too obscene to mention, spent on: expensive Belgian cotton canvas until no one made it anymore and I switched to Army Duck, Symanarts stretcher bars, MDF panels, assistant salaries, giclee prints from Duggal, and miscellaneous
- 55+ years of rigorous TV-watching (my drug of choice): General Hospital, Days of our Lives, One Life to Live, Another World, Passions, Oprah, MSNBC, CNN, Fox News, The Daily Show, Colbert Report, John Oliver, Samantha Bee, Saturday Night Live, Seth Meyers, The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore, The Late Show with Steven Colbert, Dark Shadows (via YouTube), every breaking news story we could get our hands on. Plus early listening of Lenny Bruce, Mort Sahl, Elaine May and Mike Nichols
- zero footprint on social-media

Gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 10-6. Monday by appointment. For information: Megan Paetzhold at (212) 226-3232 or megan@feldmangallery.com. For press information: <http://bit.ly/2a36NFP>

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