



Monday, November 19, 2007

## Sweet Manipulation

*Shiny, crying babies? It must be the work of an artist known as "The Manipulator."*

It's 9:00 a.m. Your train is late. But instead of peering down the subway tunnel in hopes of catching a glimmer of light, you find yourself staring at a poster of a man splattered with blood and smiling as if he's posing for a family portrait.

[Jill Greenberg](#), the photographer behind this ad for *Dexter*, as well as Gwen Stefani's album art for *The Sweet Escape*, has produced some of current pop culture's most memorable images (many can be found in back issues of *Paper* from the '90s). The rich, lush tones and satiny finish of her photos command attention, and have in turn spurred her developing gallery career. On view at [Clampart](#) until the 24th, her "End Times" series features images of anguished children while the photos of "Ursine" explore her early fascination with animals. But why crying babies and giant bears? We sat down with Greenberg to get the scoop.

"I always drew animals as characters and treated them as personalities," she told *Pulse*. "This has continued throughout my career as an artist, but I hadn't taken a step back to realize it until recently. The monkey series started in 2004 when I was doing a commercial assignment. When I got the film back and saw the results, I was in love. It was the first time I had decided to do a series of personal work since I had devoted most of my energies to my commercial career."

But it's still hard for Greenberg to look at the end product, especially star-driven pieces, as art. "I try to treat every assignment as if it is art, but I would never have thought to exhibit my celebrity portraiture in a gallery until now. It's complicated, because much of the work we all consider to be art in art history books, was commissioned by the personalities of the time."

So what's up next for this talent? "I am doing more work with children and with consenting adults as well. My first exhibition of celebrity portraiture is currently showing at the Arclight Theatre in Los Angeles, and I just got a book deal for the bears. I'm getting a bit spoiled doing so much of my own work, though; I love editing and retouching with no client except me!"

*Clampart is located at 521-531 West 25th Street, (646) 230-0020.*

- Barbara Roan, Arts & Event Coordinator

