

# Gallery5

January 14 -  
March 25  
2007

## *Cosmic Hostess*

work by **Lorraine Peltz**

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For the sake of a single poem, you must see many cities, many people and Things, you must understand animals, must feel how birds fly, and know the gesture which small flowers make when they open in the morning. You must be able to think back to streets in unknown neighborhoods, to unexpected encounters, and to partings you had long seen coming; to days of childhood whose mystery is still unexplained, to parents whom you had to hurt when they brought in a joy and you didn't pick it up ( it was a joy meant for somebody else---); to childhood illness that began so strangely with so many profound and difficult transformations, to days in quiet, restrained rooms and to mornings by the sea, to the sea itself, to seas, to nights of travel that rushed along high overhead and went flying with all the stars, --- and it is still not enough to be able think of that. You must have many nights of love, each one different than the others, memories of women screaming in labor, of light, pale, sleeping girls who have just given birth and are closing again. But you must also have been beside the dying, must have sat beside the dead in the room with the open window and the scattered noises. And it is not yet enough to have memories. You must be able to forget them when they are many, and you must have the immense patience to wait until they return. For the memories themselves are not important. Only when they are changed into our very blood, into glance and gesture, and are nameless, no longer to be distinguished from ourselves ----- only then can it happen that in some very rare hour the first word of a poem arises in their midst and goes forth from them.

From *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*,  
by Rainer Maria Rilke, translated from German by Stephen Mitchell.

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*Cosmic Hostess*  
2006  
oil on canvas  
36 x 36 inches

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## Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 [www.hydeparkart.org](http://www.hydeparkart.org)

The Hyde Park Art Center is a not-for-profit organization that presents innovative exhibitions, primarily work by Chicago-area artists, and educational programs in the visual arts for children and adults of diverse backgrounds. The Center is funded in part by the Alphawood Foundation; The Chicago Community Trust; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council; the Illinois Humanities Council; the National Endowment for the Humanities; and the Illinois General Assembly; The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; The Lucius and Eva Eastman Foundation; The Field Foundation of Illinois; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; The Leo S. Guthman Fund; The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Joyce Foundation; The Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; Kraft Foods; The MacArthur Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The National Endowment for the Arts; The Orbit Fund; The Playboy Foundation; Polk Bros. Foundation; The Clinton Family Fund; The Sara Lee Foundation; South East Chicago Commission; The Terra Foundation for American Art; and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and the generosity of its members and friends.

As a Cosmic Hostess, Lorraine Peltz' serves us up with paintings that journey out into the cosmos, through deep and sometimes troubled waters, and into orange day-dreams. Peltz' new paintings continue to examine the dreamy side of feminine fantasy and fashion culture, expanding that dialogue with the addition of images of food and plants. Drawing from nature during a 2005 Residency at the Roger Brown House in New Buffalo, Michigan, she translates some of those images into the mix of her new paintings.

By combining various painting languages including recognizable imagery, signs and symbols, and even a bit of painterly abstraction, Peltz attempts to mimic and reconcile how information comes to us, and how meaning is made, bit by bit - real life alongside memory, poetry next to prose. These become landscapes of both the exterior world and an interior space of dream, desire, hope, and memory. Her images of plums, pears, and even cupcakes commingle the likes of 17th century still life painting with pop imagery of lightning bolts, puffy clouds, painted lips, rainbows, strolling legs, swans, ominous blackbirds, and more.

As Lisa Wainwright, Dean of Graduate Studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Professor of Art History, wrote in 2006, here are "worlds aqueous and cosmic, airy and verdant. The paintings glow with uncanny resonance and optical sheen. And then Peltz interrupts the dreaminess to cast a range of signs into ethereal spaces. Myriad symbols in their speech bubble niches hint at a narrative that unfolds from picture to picture. Both of nature and from culture, her icons speak to the polemic between essentialism and social construction that still grips feminist discourse. .... the mix of aesthetic delight and conceptual reading makes ...one of Peltz's strongest shows to date."



*Perfect Pair*  
2007  
oil on canvas  
48 x 50 inches

Lorraine Peltz received her MFA from the University of Chicago and her BFA from the State University of New York at New Paltz. Peltz currently teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.