

## GALLERIES

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SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

**Personal Meaning:** It's not particularly shocking to use one's bodily fluids and excreta as artistic material. Consider the reverence with which we regard art made with Piero Manzoni's feces, Mona Hatoum's hair, Janine Antoni's saliva and so on.

Yet there is something haunting, though likewise off-putting, about Liz Young's blood paintings at Post Gallery. I suspect it has something to do with Young's unmitigated embrace of the morbid.

Blood itself has a long history within contemporary and especially feminist art—from Gina Pane to Judy Chicago, from Ana Mendieta to Eleanor Antin, the latter of whom collected 100 glass slides with specimens of the blood of 100 poets. These artists were variously making points about feminine subjection, cultural displacement and the artist as martyr.

By contrast, Young's small rust-colored painting-cum-icons, which are based upon photographs of dead members of the artist's family, are relentlessly personal. They don't reflect upon the duplicity of memory—or anything else for that matter.

Rather, they smell overwhelmingly of grief. This makes them unavoidable but embarrassing, putting the viewer in the position of coolly appraising the spectacle of someone else's sorrow.

Young seems aware of the double bind. By lining the walls of the room with plywood planks that have been branded with the pattern of burial boxes for a family of four, she attempts to leaven things with a bit of irony. This gesture doesn't really go over as humor. Perhaps it shouldn't: Laughter would permit us to look away.

■ *Post Gallery, 1904 E. 7th Place, (213) 488-3379, through March 15. Closed Sunday and Monday.*

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