

# Julianne Rose

## Flesh and Plastic

By Raisa Clavijo

With vast experience in advertising photography, Julianne Rose, an Australian artist residing in Paris, constructs a discourse in which she criticizes the harmful effects of rampant consumerism and the manipulatory strategies of the advertising industry in the formation of human beings' identities.

Her photographs and sculptures are based on childhood as the fundamental and primary phase of existence. Through playing, moral and behavioral codes, which endure in one's conscience and to a great extent condition one's future actions, are assimilated during childhood. Playing is an imitation of the adult world through which human beings develop attitudes, learn moral values and recognize themselves as belonging to specific social groups.

Toy design leads children to assimilate stereotypes regarding beauty, perfection, the quest for elevated social status, the consumption of material goods, etc. In this way, childhood is manipulated by an idealized model created by adults' fantasies, thereby converting toddlers into kinds of human toys.

Thus, the toys in Rose's oeuvre are both a resource and a metaphor for the manipulation and objectification of the individual in contemporary society. Through a reinterpretation of the toy as a cultural icon, the artist reflects on the formation of identity in an environment that promotes massification and alienation.

*flesh/plastic, reality/irreality, animate/inanimate,*



Throughout her career as an photographer, Julianne Rose has captured images of hundreds of children for commercial advertisements. The stereotypical idea that adults have about childhood is used to excess because advertising agencies well know that images of beautiful children reach into the hearts and pockets of consumers.

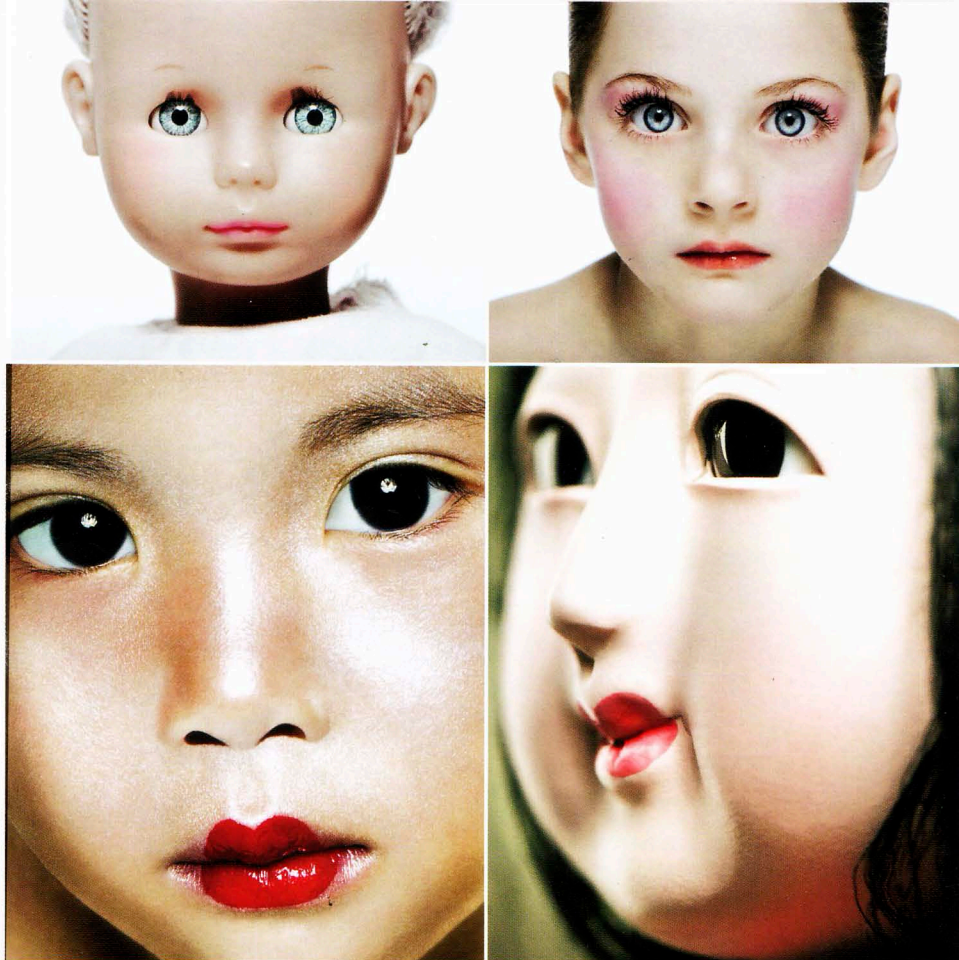
In fact, her series "Flesh And Plastic" questions the use of children's images in advertising, and also addresses the extent to which consumerism and advertising standardize individual behavior, paradigms of beauty and lifestyles. The series consists of diptychs that juxtapose a child's actual image with that of his identical doll replica. In each case a duality is created: flesh/plastic, reality/irreality, animate/inanimate, living/non-living. It is a duality in which the child appears as an objectified entity turned into just another fetish of consumption. At the same time, he is also a potential customer for the toys he will unconsciously try to resemble.

This ambiguity between the real being and its mimetic representation is also evident in "Live Dolls," a series in which the artist presents dolls with infantile and childlike faces, models of perfection that simultaneously hide discriminatory, disquieting and perverse shades. The exhibition catalogue for "Ultra Peau" at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris) in the summer of 2006 refers to this series: "Are these visions extracts taken from a catalogue of perfect children to order or are they living dolls?" These enormous photographs exude a dehumanized sensuality, an ideal nourished by mass media. Dolls with beautiful eyes and desirable skin exemplify a beauty that many of us begin pursuing at an early age.

"Kids for Sale" demonstrates how toys promote the consumption of material goods, and also instill idealized societal roles, in accordance with their genre. Nurses, housewives, runway models, sports figures, secretaries, fashion photographers are some

of the "preferred professions" the artist recreates in this series. "Kids for Sale" constitutes a somewhat sarcastic caricature of the sexist patterns of behavior we adults use to manipulate the formation of children's identities.

Julianne Rose reflects on the objectification of the individual within the world of fashion in "Autoportrait Chantant." This piece is based on her own personal story. When at the age of 18 she was chosen as "Australia's Face of '85," she suddenly went from being an anonymous young girl residing in a small town to being Australia's top model. She ceased to be a think-

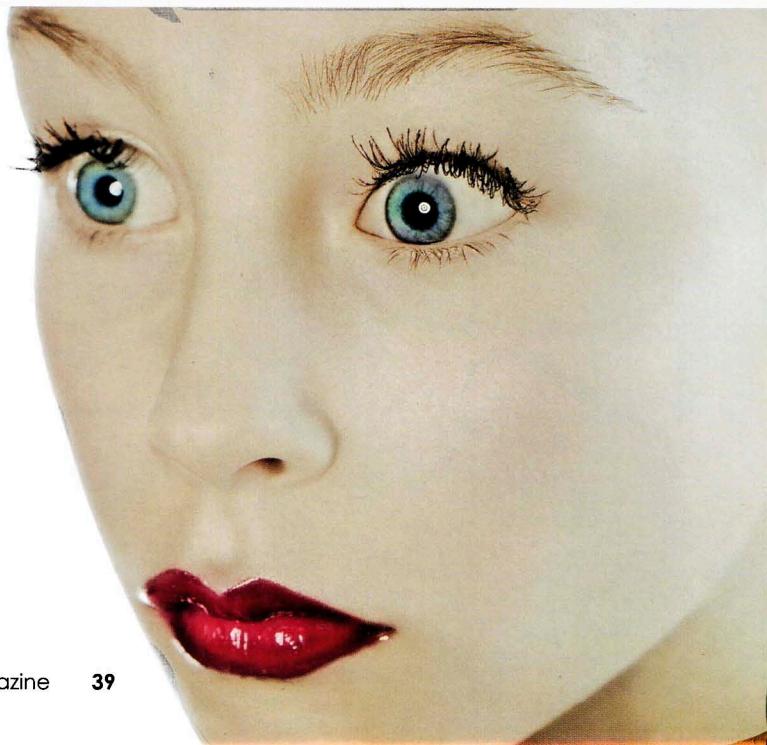


**Facing Page** - Live Dolls n°2, 2006 - Digital print mounted on aluminium, Diasec  
**Size** 120 cm / 31-1/2 x 47-1/4 inches  
**Edition** de 8 + 1 e.a / Edition of 8 + 1 artist proof  
**Image** Courtesy of the artist and Galerie 13Séviégné, Paris

**Above** (Top pair of images): FleshAndPlastic #2, 2006  
**Size** 160 cm (60 x 80 cm chaque) 23-5/8 x 63 in (23-1/4 x 31-1/2 in each)  
**Bottom pair of images**: FleshAndPlastic #4, 2005  
**Size** 120 cm (80 x 60 cm chaque) / 31-1/2 x 47-1/4 in (31-1/2 x 23-5/8 in each)  
**All** Digital print mounted on aluminium, Diasec  
**Edition** de 8 + 1 e.a / Edition of 8 + 1 artist proof  
**Image** Courtesy of the artist and Galerie 13Séviégné, Paris

**Right** - Live Dolls n°9, 2006 - Digital print mounted on aluminium, Diasec  
**Size** 120 cm / 31-1/2 x 47-1/4 inches  
**Edition** de 8 + 1 e.a / Edition of 8 + 1 artist proof  
**Image** Courtesy of the artist and Galerie 13Séviégné, Paris

living/non-living.







Above : Autoportrait Chantant , 2006 SURVIVAL WORLD TOUR  
23/08/1966 - 23/08/2006 - Photographs, sound & lights  
100 x 141 x 25 cm / 39-3/8 x 55-1/8 x 9-7/8 inches

Below Left : KidsForSale #3, 2005 - Steve Fashion Photographer  
Dimensions : 30,2 x 23,2 cm / 11,8 x 9,1 inches  
Fujiflex print mounted on aluminium, diasec  
Image Courtesy of the artist and Galerie 13Séviègné, Paris

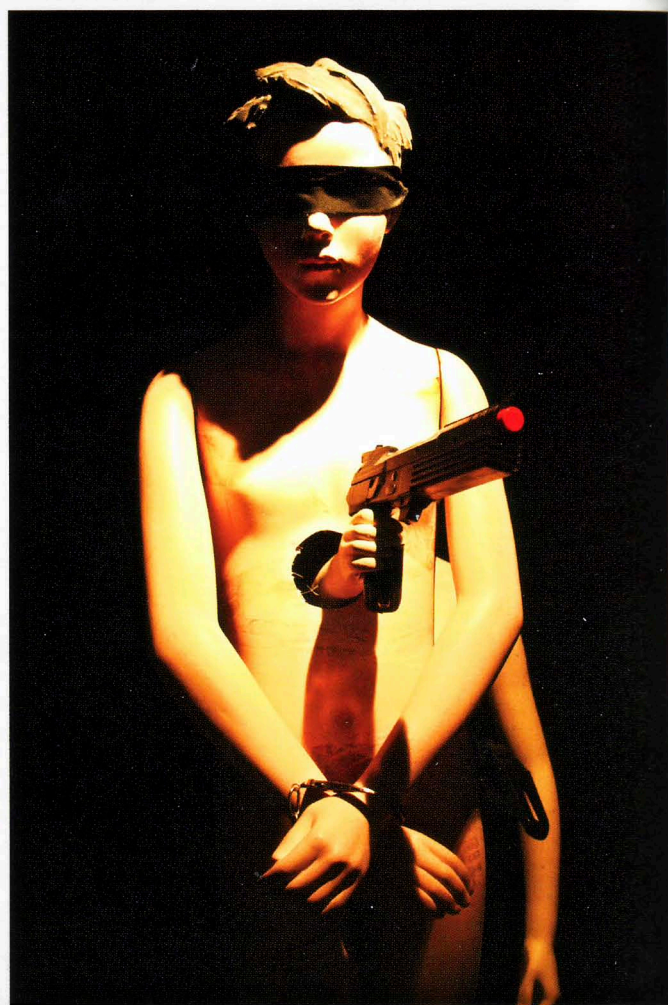
Below Right : Armed Response, 2006 (detail)  
Installation view at Hardcore Contemporary Art Space, Miami (March 2008)



ing being, and simply became a desirable face. In "Autoportrait Chantant" she portrays herself transformed from a live model into a lifeless model. The piece is comprised of three panels. In the center there appears a photograph of the artist as a top model, made-up and coiffed like a plastic doll with a sound mechanism in her chest. Two photographs of a doll, a replica of the artist, occupy the lateral panels. When the spectator presses down on the righthand side of her chest the melody I will survive by Gloria Gaynor can be heard. It is a premonitory song through which the artist tries to regain the voice and ideas that others previously quashed.

One of the strongest and most impressive works by this creator is "Armed Response." An edition of this piece was recently exhibited at Hardcore Art Contemporary Space in Miami's Wynwood Art District. It is an installation that demonstrates how violence has taken over the world of children. Currently, children's movies, the Internet, video games and many other toys convey messages that incite war, discrimination, racism, militarism, egoism, and cruelty. In the gallery space "Armed Response" displays a set of life-sized mannequins that represent naked children of different races in violent poses. The coldness and candidness of their faces contrast with the cruelty of their actions. They brandish weapons, assault, skewer their peers with swords and lances, torture, and discharge machine guns in terribly dramatic mise en scènes. They are scenes that mimic many children who are perhaps at this very moment moving the buttons of their video games in order to detonate bombs within a building full of people, or inflict the most painful of punishments on imaginary hostages.

Julianne Rose's work explores a terrain lacking in contempo-







rary ethics, but which is trying to produce moral values in a world that has chosen the illusion of appearance, a skeptical world that has confused objects of value for humanity. Her work is a wake-up call, an agonizing shout reminding us that the children we are currently raising will be the adults of the future.

This artist's oeuvre has been very well received by art critics and collectors. During 2006 she participated in the SLICK contemporary art fair in Paris. She also exhibited "The Flesh & Blood Toystore" at the Galerie 13Seigné in Paris and participated in the exhibition "Ultra Peau" at the Palais de Tokyo. In 2007, she exhibited "Objectif Feminin" at the Australian Embassy in Paris. Furthermore, she has participated in international exhibitions and fairs in the United States, notably Photo Miami 2007 and more recently "Armed Response" at Hardcore Art Contemporary Space (December 2007 – March 2008). □

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Above : ArmedResponse #16&17, 2006 - Digital print mounted on aluminium, Diasec  
 Edition de 8 + 1 e.a / Edition of 8 + 1 artist proof  
 Image Courtesy of the artist and Galerie 13Seigné, Paris

Right : ArmedResponse #07, 2006 - Digital print mounted on aluminium, Diasec  
 Edition de 8 + 1 e.a / Edition of 8 + 1 artist proof  
 Image Courtesy of the artist and Galerie 13Seigné, Paris

