

# METRO PICTURES

McClellont, Doug. "Reviews: Bad Conscience," *ARTnews* (March 2014): 52.

## ARTnews

reviews: new york

### 'Bad Conscience'

#### Metro Pictures

Gallery artist John Miller, who is also a writer and college professor, called upon friends and former students to contribute to this multigenerational group exhibition that examined authorship and angst combined with dark humor and a wide variety of skills.

Photography, painting, and video works, installed salon style, filled the large gallery, and the effect was like entering someone's id. Indeed, Freudian vapors were everywhere: from a painting of a strip club in Times Square in the 1980s by Jane Dickson, to Aura Rosenberg and Leigh Ledare's psychosexual artistic investigations. Rosenberg, who once did a series of photographs of men at the moment of orgasm, displayed a reworking of a drawing by a five-year-old male patient of the Viennese psychoanalyst. The boy had insisted that the giraffe in the picture sport a rudimentary penis. Ledare goes even further in exploring authorship and impulse by asking children to collaborate with him for *Clementine* (2013), a large photograph of his naked mother. The anonymous children, no doubt shocked on some fundamental level, have scribbled over the mother's face and torso to disturbing but inadvertently handsome effect.

Vice and vanity are examined in Lyle Ashton Harris's large pigment-on-tissue-paper work in which the artist makes a list of resolutions such as "No unsafe sex" and "No public sex." And the painter and art critic Walter Robinson weighed in with his amiable form of hazy realism in painted homages to cheeseburgers and gin bottles. In an intriguing twist, Marilyn Minter's contributions were not her well-known close-ups of sloppy, libidinous, high-fashion figures, but early realistic paintings of seemingly banal still lifes, featuring coffee spills and curled paper on a linoleum floor.

Further animating the entire exhibition was a small video projected onto a blank canvas by Wangechi Mutu, titled *Shoe Shoe* (2010). In the black-and-white video, a woman, the artist herself, is cast as an angry and presumably



Leigh Ledare, *Clementine*, 2013.  
oil stick on C-print, 50" x 40" Metro Pictures.

homeless person throwing shoes at us from her shopping cart. One could have become self-conscious about viewing all the depravity and artistry on display.

—Doug McClellont