



Paulina Olowska *Applied Fantastic*

October 28 – December 18, 2010
Opening: Thursday October 28, 6-8 pm

For her second exhibition at Metro Pictures, Paulina Olowska shows paintings and knitted sweaters adapted from postcards of home knitting patterns from late communist-era Poland. With these works Olowska continues her engagement with communist Poland's fascination with Western consumerism and celebrates the spirit and stylish improvisations of the "Applied Fantastic." Polish writer Leopold Tyrmand, describing the localized re-creations of Western styles, coined the term "Applied Fantastic" in 1954.

Olowska incorporates text and graphics from the illustrations including the Polish names for the pattern styles. The paintings are done in a realist style that achieves the same disjointed effects of the postcards. The illustrations used by Olowska depict high-fashion looks to be fabricated at home and, however glamorous, the images have a decidedly "behind the iron curtain" look. These works also pay tribute to American Pattern and Decoration art of the 1970s and its use of non-traditional contemporary art mediums such as tiles and textiles.

Olowska, who lives and works in the Polish countryside, commissioned Min Stiller to create sweaters from the original patterns. These will be shown alongside drawings, posters and various images and objects that are part of Olowska's "inspiration wall" that will be recreated from the artist's studio.

Recent one-person exhibitions include Tramway, Glasgow (2010); Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2009 – 2010); DAAD Galerie, Berlin (2008 – 2009); and Portikus, Frankfurt (2007). In 2011, Olowska will participate in a residency and exhibition at the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco.

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10-6pm

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Image: pattern postcard from Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza