## frieze.com

## Search the Archive

Submit



Columns

Features

Reviews

Listings

Advertise

Subscribe

Back Issues

Shop

Contact

Join our mailing list for news from frieze

email@addr

Join

Reviews

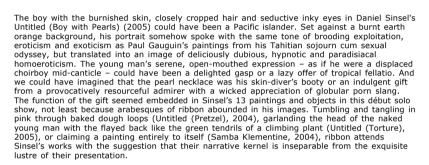


< back to search results

## **Daniel Sinsel**

Sadie Coles HQ, London, UK

Max Andrews



The saucer-sized painting Untitled (Rosehips) (2004) could almost be a miniature for a lover's locket. At the centre of the disc of linen is the disembodied head of another young man whose image was purloined, as was the case with the other portraits in the show, from a vintage gay porn magazine. Porn-derived artworks often seem like a woefully bankrupt applied content solution to a programmatic template – whether in Thomas Ruff's blurred photographs or Fiona Banner's handwritten skin-flick text works. But Sinsel is not looking to import any off-the-peg prurience into his art – although some of his earlier work not in this exhibition, such as Untitled (Hovering Penises) (2001), certainly bordered on the bawdy. Instead he harvested the images of the young men in Untitled (Rosehips), Untitled (Boy with Pearls) and other works for their electric gazes, atoning their awkward attempts at provocation with a coterie of connoisseurship alongside nuts and knives, horn, gems and rare woods. In the former cameo images two gorgeous rosehips and a virgin hazelnut mast were painted to appear like they were floating around the nameless man's pallid face, perhaps deployed in an act of sympathetic magic that might cast a hedgerow spell over the painting's owner.

The most successful of Sinsel's painted object works in this show shared with Untitled (Rosehips) and Untitled (Boy with Pearls) the arcane quality of esotericism combined with fecund perversion by deploying inanimate natural materials as if attempting to produce a three-dimensional visual potion or a fertility trophy. Untitled (Edelweiss) (2004) and Untitled (Gentian) (2005) – each work takes its title from a jewel-like alpine-needy flower – were both mounted at painting height on the walls of the gallery. Untitled (Edelweiss) comprised an eggshell painted baize-green and blotting-paper-pink as well as another plump hazelnut symbol. Sprouting from the top of the egg were two tiny coral-like, pristine white antlers crowned with points of diamond and yellow sapphires, while below a short cluster of salt-and-pepper horsehairs begged to be gently caressed or plaited. Untitled (Gentian) took form around a cube made of yew – Druids' wood of choice for their wands – painted with an octagonal design. From a recess on the top protruded a wedge of yellow-stained boxwood and a lump of the delicately pale green crystalline chrysoprase. Untitled (Ggy with Spiked Face) (2004) was an immaculate curse. An egg hung from a gold chain attached to a carved and diamond embellished section of laburnum – a fittingly poisonous tree. Painted on the shell was the head of another porn protagonist, this time wrecked and bleeding from several skewers to his smirking face.

Unlike Dario Robleto, who also uses pointedly relic-like materials in his constructions, the cruel magic of Sinsel's work is less an effect of the sedimentation of history or of collective memory than a microclimate of an intrapersonal and aesthetic intimacy. His works are small but potent – handfuls that stimulate and are fuelled by distilled indulgence, both sexual and decorous.

Max Andrews

Columns | Features | Reviews | Listings | Advertise | Subscribe | Back Issues

©Copyright Frieze 2006





