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GOTHAM ART & THEATER
by Elisabeth Kley**Colette: Girl Talk**

A metaphorical descendent of the Countess Castiglione (glamorous inventor of the staged self-portrait photograph), Colette has lived out a continuous masquerade since her first private performance in 1970, taking on appropriated personas including de Sade's Justine, Manet's Olympia, Mata Hari and, most recently, a creature named Lumiere. Blurring the boundaries between public and private as well as between installation, shop window and stage, she poses and performs, often sleeping, inside elaborate, almost Rococo environments she creates in her apartments, and in galleries, nightclubs and stores.

Colette uses her performance documentation as elements in small two-dimensional works, and many examples of her almost overpowering ornamentation were on view in "Girl Talk," at Pavel Zoubok Gallery, Apr. 22-May 22, 2010. Somewhere between paintings and photos, they are embellished with pale layers of paint, foil or glitter, and overlaid with resin, creating a sort of fantasy mist that can bring Joseph Cornell to mind. She often surrounds her own image with perforation marks, as if she is a paper doll waiting to be cut out. Sometimes the perforation marks move around her figure in strange geometric diagrams like those used by Cocteau, John Graham or Pavel Tchelitchev.

swag and ruffles, echoing the poses of centuries of nudes. Reflected in a fabric-surrounded mirror in the center of the image, she seems double and redouble herself infinitely into the distance within the frame. The cloying heavy drapery resembles the inside of a jewelry box -- or even a coffin.

The exhibition also includes two armless mannequin sculptures swathed in stiffened white cloth, a reference to the Surrealist roots of Colette's work. Light bulbs are where the heads should be, covered by upside down half-globe shades that propel illumination to the ceiling. Lights also shine from inside their hollow bodies, thus completely and conclusively portraying her persona, Lumiere, as an incandescent manifestation. Prices range from \$3,000 for the smallest mixed media works to \$25,000 for the mannequin sculptures.



Colette
Colette Lamp
1973
Pavel Zoubok Gallery



Colette
Light Sculpture, Maison de la Lumiere
2004
Pavel Zoubok Gallery



Colette
Records from the story of my life series
1978-2007: *Real Dream Installation*
Performance at Clocktower
1975
Pavel Zoubok Gallery



Colette
Lumiere Series
1997-2000
Pavel Zoubok Gallery