

# Honoring The Artists of the Hamptons



—Photo by Peter Hill

## HEDY KLINEMAN

Hedy Klineman calls herself an "abstract expressionist," but she uses easily recognized images in new combinations to make a comment on our times.

"Artists are usually ahead of their time, but the media brings new ideas so quickly to the public today — we're so connected — that our eyes and minds are quick to grasp new concepts."

The cover portrait of Andy Warhol, from her "Auction Series," is an example of her new portraiture. Since her friend Warhol was a major shopper and collector, she went to Sotheby's auctions of his collections to buy something she could use in her paintings. She ended up buying several lots of 1950s jewelry and using it on canvas, along with paint and silkscreens of Warhol and the auction tickets, to create aspects of Warhol's personality.

Klineman is attractive, dedicated, fortysomething and very much a New York woman in the vanguard. She lives and works in both the City and East Hampton. Her rambling, old home and studio in East Hampton Village are filled with light and air — wonderful places to work through all the stimuli of our culture.

She sees American culture of the 1980's as "fashion and art as entertainment", and she is experiencing the 1990's as a social-issue decade.

In the early 1980's Klineman started to take pieces of her own favorite clothing, such as designer scarves or Victorian-style slips popular in the 1970's, and use them as a medium on canvas along with paint to create self-portraits. She discovered that she could give a sense of herself in classic abstract expressionist style, using texture and color, without doing a figurative portrait.

Her "experiments" were so effective that she embarked on portraits of more than 350 people in the arts. These became her successful "Fashion Portrait" series. Exhibited in New York City

and at the Vered Gallery and East Hampton Center for Contemporary Art, some of her favorites are of artist-friends Andy Warhol and Larry Rivers, entertainer Michael Jackson, art collector Henry Geldzahler, and *East Hampton Star* editor and publisher Helen Rattray. Each portrait has at least one real piece of the subject's clothing.

By the end of the 1980's, Klineman found herself heading in a new direction. "I was taking the public images from newspapers, magazines, television and comic books and making them my own. It started with the Andy Warhol portrait,

with other auction paraphernalia such as bidders' paddles.

Klineman has also started a "Comic Heroes" series where she is using Superman, Dick Tracy, Wonder Woman and even Donald Trump as symbols to comment on the present state of society and express her hope for the future. In a world filled with violence, she hopes that good will triumph over evil and the good guy will win.

"Donald Trump is a great example of our transition from the personality-as-entertainer of the 1980's to the comic-book hero of the 1990's. We want him to get his finances in order, to have the Ivana situation settled, for them both to be happy apart or together again."

Her subjects for the 1990's includes the Berlin Wall, the fall of Communism, Robert Mapplethorpe, Jesse Helms. She pointed out to me a July 29 piece by the *The New York Times* music critic Donal Henahan, called "A World Gone POW!" It comments that the arts are now in a comic-strip phase. "We're into blatant simplification," Henahan writes, "because that is the essence of comics."

Hedy Klineman sees our late 20th century world crumbling around us and our search for new ideas and meaning and heroes to take us into the 21st century. She is using her experiments with comic-hero figures, color and texture in silkscreens to take her to new and unexpected places. Perhaps, as an artist, she will provide some new paths for us.

Her latest works, including the very powerful "The Party's Over" mixed media portrait of the fall of Communism, will be at the Vered Gallery from August 25 to September 13.

She will also be in the opening show of the new Rempire Gallery on Green Street in Soho in September, and then will have a solo exhibition in early 1991.

—Jan Denenholz Silver

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which I wanted to do in silkscreen, one of his mediums."

"I discovered that silkscreening is about texture and brushstroke — two of the classic tools of abstract expressionists. I started to do the silkscreens myself, manipulating the screens and inks, so that each painting came out a little different."

She found herself very affected by the auctions in the art world — "Auctions have become art centers" — and she started on her auction pieces, which include the Warhol portraits and paintings