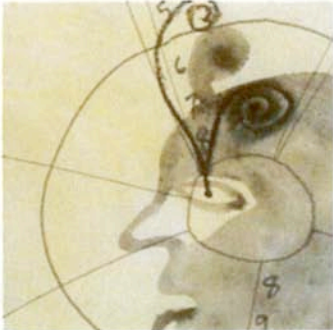


# NYP NEWYORKPRESS

2-8 FEBRUARY 2005



Traces Everywhere | Through Sat., Feb. 26

Opening the door to the garden entrance of Tracy Williams's West Village townhouse feels a lot like breaking and entering. Not that I know what that feels like. The closest I've ever come to robbing someone was back in tenth grade, when some friends and I tried to steal one of those portable basketball hoops from a neighbor's driveway. But that excitement, that anxiety, that dread that any minute the cops are gonna show up—which they did—that's the sort of exhilaration I get walking through Williams' homely gallery.

It's not just the exposed brick walls or the upstairs fireplace or the deck with its garden view. Nor is it the proprietor herself working away at her desk—unassuming, attractive, smartly dressed. Nor is it the absence of prices and even names alongside the expertly hung work, as if the furniture was to arrive any day now. More than anything, it's the work itself that generates that particular thrill of partaking in something illegal.

Take the current show, *Traces Everywhere*, featuring works on paper by a dozen artists as diverse in style as experience and background. Veteran Matt Mullican's stick figure series shares wall space with rising star Daniel Hesidence's bizarre but beautiful abstractions, while Zipora Fried's 30-foot graphite runner is nicely juxtaposed with Judy Ledgerwood's delicate, silver-on-vellum rivulets. With passages including, "The guy falls on his knees fucking the girl's arse, his erection disappearing between her buttocks, then coming out shining with pussy juice, or piss or whatever," Fiona Banner's novella-length texts are captivating and profound, yet no more so than Anne-Marie Schneider's innocent rabbit sketches.

The one thing this work shares is sincerity. It's not art about art or politics or gender or religion or race—even the pair of uncharacteristically playful watercolors by Ouattara Watts. It's art—plain and not so simple. Foreign as that concept seems, it explains why walking through Williams' gallery feels so thrillingly dangerous.

Tracy Williams Ltd., 313 W. 4th St. (betw. Bank & W. 12th Sts.); 212-229-2757; Tues.-Sat., 11-6; free.

—Sean Manning