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Galleries

By Edith Newhall
For The Inquirer

Is there anything Ann Agee can't make?

You have to wonder, walking through Agee's second one-person show at Locks Gallery, "Kitchen Sink," which has almost everything, and a kitchen sink. Simply put, it's an installation of Agee's arts and crafts that merges her domestic life and studio practice, as such artists as McDermott & McGough, Colette, and Izhar Patkin have done - except that Agee has made everything you see.

Here are gleaming white porcelain sculptures of intricately fashioned human figures and flowers. They look like 18th-century collectibles until you see that said humans are in fact present-day characters doing all manner of contemporary things, and that she has also included a few lifelike porcelain fetuses; huge paintings on paper, like theatrical tableaux, depicting the interior of her Brooklyn studio in bold Matissean strokes and colors; dresses sewn by Agee composed from her own exquisitely patterned hand-printed fabric; platform shoes in Fiestaware hues; wall-mounted assemblages of Agee's porcelain plates; enormous glass jars she molded and filled with her homemade marmalade; and that elegant wall-mounted ceramic sink, among other things.

A viewer might logically wonder if this is Agee's meditation on her own existence as a hardworking New York artist and wife or a send-up of the Martha Stewart aspirational lifestyle. I think it's the former - an appreciation of the independent woman who can make everything she needs. Whatever the case, I marvel at her amazing handiwork.



Ann Agee's paintings of her Brooklyn studio, from her wide-ranging installation at Locks Gallery.

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