

PECCADILLOES

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AMANDA ELIASCH

SEVEN NEONS

16 JUNE through 16 JULY 2011

LEADAPRON

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AMANDA ELIASCH: PECCADILLOES

One approach to art is to take something measurable and make it immeasurable through the prism of one's imagination. Amanda Eliasch has flipped this notion and taken something immeasurable and made it measurable. She is using a noble gas as her material, though common in the universe is quite rare on earth, namely, neon. Her subject is again a flip, common on earth, but supposedly clarified once reaching the heavens, namely sin. Sin is also an ether. Where does it come from and can you hold it in your hand? To be greedy or slothful or envious first happens in the mind, only later do these sins manifest as consequences that effect oneself and others. Similarly neon is extracted from the air. There is an alchemy to the artist's approach and Amanda is quite versed in turning a dull metal into gold.

Since the nativity of time, artists have tried to bring to the light those impulses that drive us, whether they be our darkest fears, desires, aspirations or dreams. The creative process is an enlightening drawing out ideas or expressions that are first in the milky shadows or air or in space. This too can be said of the sins, which are like nascent drives ready to be awakened at any given time. Amanda is keen enough to realize that our culture profits on our sins and even encourages them. Sins sell.

Furthermore, it is neon that welcomes us to sin, neon is a symbol of sin, whether it be announcing a strip club or a sugar filled soda. Again, neon has been used for signage and many artists have used these glow lamps to convey their own messages. From Bruce Nauman's "The true artist helps the world by revealing mystic truths," in which he expresses a private thought to a public by means of a spiral neon sign to Dan Flavin's "Proposals," Amanda is using the pure intention of neon to both expose and reveal what neon aims to express and furthermore, much like Tracey Emin or Cindy Sherman, in multiple layers of symbolism, she places herself as the subject of this intention to humour, to question and to confound. She admits to being a sinner, while at the same time stating humorously that her sins are just *peccadilloes*. Are these mantras or jokes? Amanda wants also to remind us of the prevalence of sin and express her concern that we as a people and culture are losing a grip on values and morality in what she calls a "feckless and fallow world," but she wants to do it in a soft, candy colored way so as to not beat us over the head with it.

Morris W. Travers, a British Chemist who discovered neon wrote, "the blaze of crimson light from the tube told its own story and was a sight to dwell upon and never forget," and this is precisely what Amanda is aiming for.

JONATHAN BROWN