

Warhol Wigs and Eyeball Lamps Tease Window Shoppers With Art

By Linda Yablonsky

Dec. 22 (Bloomberg) -- At Barneys, Hermes, Louis Vuitton and Calvin Klein in New York, artworks that are totally unrelated to the holidays have driven away Rudolf and all the elves.

``Warhol-idays``: For more than a decade, Barneys has set the gold standard for Christmas displays. This year, the New York flagship's windows are dedicated to that great shopaholic, Andy Warhol. The dioramas, by Simon Doonan, offer theatrical assemblages of Warhol-related objects, images and epigrams from both Warhol and celebrity friends like Truman Capote, who observed that Andy was ``a Sphinx without a secret.

As at every Barneys in the country, one window is reserved for portraits of Warhol by local schoolchildren, with sales to benefit their art programs. In New York, the small canvases look suspiciously -- and appropriately -- like self-portraits.

The platinum wigs, hand-drawn dollar signs and Studio 54 ticket stubs filling other windows make for even headier viewing. Oddly, on a recent afternoon I was the only person on the crowded sidewalk who seemed to notice.

Barneys New York, Madison Avenue and 61st Street. Information: <http://www.barneys.com/holiday/windows> .

Cyclops Lamps

Vuitton's ``Eye See You``: It's not every day that the windows of a luxury-goods store like Louis Vuitton can instill quiet self-reflection, rather than desire, envy or outright resentment. For the season, the store has replaced the rich goods that usually populate its windows with monster heat-lamps on tripods.

Designed by the Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson, the faceted amber-and-violet lamps each resemble the pupil of a particularly jewel-like Cyclops eye and mirror everything on the street before them. In reality, they are cheap versions of the limited-edition lamps the artist created to raise \$1 million dollars for an Ethiopian orphanage.

``Eye See You,`` by Olafur Eliasson, on view through the holidays at Louis Vuitton, Fifth Avenue at 57th Street. Information: <http://www.121ethiopia.org> .

Flying Contraptions

Hermes ``Inventions``: Though Hermes regularly features new video art in its windows, for holiday time it chose doll-like, painted-plaster sculptures by Aga Ousseinov to illustrate the store's hometown theme, ``Beneath the Parisian Sky.`` Ousseinov's objects all depict 19th-century inventions that moved both people and information into the 20th century -- biplanes, submersibles, movie cameras and the like. They have a cartoony folk-art appeal and would look equally right either sitting under a Christmas tree or flying around it --especially if draped with silk ties, as they are here.

``Inventions`` by Aga Ousseinov, at Hermes, 691 Madison Ave., at 62nd Street. Information: <http://www.agaousseinov.com> .

Icy Birds

Calvin Klein's ``Snowscape``: Anthony Goicolea is an artist best known for digitally altered photographs depicting multiple versions of himself in theatrically oversize landscapes. For the window of the white-on-white Calvin Klein store, he has installed one of these environments, a swooping, 60-foot-long winter wonderland complete with snowbirds and footprints. It looks a little like an icy tree house -- or a sleigh bed that shopped-out humans have abandoned to their confounded feathered friends.

Calvin Klein, 654 Madison Ave., at 60th Street. Information: <http://www.anthonygoicolea.com> .

(Linda Yablonsky is an art critic for Bloomberg News. The opinions expressed are her own.)

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