

# ARTFORUM

Artforum.com Critic's Pick  
January 2007

**Cameron**

NICOLE KLAGSBRUN GALLERY

526 West 26th Street, Room 213, January 12–February 10



*Fairy Queen*, 1962, ink and dyes  
on parchment, 17 x 14 1/4"

The first drawings one encounters in this exhibition herald a talent abundant enough to work assuredly in varied styles. One is a colored-pencil study of a three-headed siren whose body consists of artichoke-like overlapping leaves; another is an extreme close-up of a woman's face, rendered in ink as if doodled in an architecture wire-frame program; a third is a small, ethereal pencil study of a child sketched with the casual virtuosity of a nineteenth-century academic painter. Marjorie Cameron Parsons Kimmel, known as Cameron, was a prodigiously talented draftsman, but the diversity of this initial flurry is somewhat misleading. The majority of the drawings in this large exhibition, the first solo gallery presentation of the late artist's work, are like the siren, and bear the influence of the dark visions she experienced from childhood and her interest in Aleister Crowley's occult mysticism. They are a shadow

that gives clearer form to our understanding of West Coast Beat culture. Cameron worked in series, from black-ink "Slaves," 1966, suspended in the middle of blank pages as if possessed, to "Pluto Transiting the Twelfth House," 1978–86, in which faint figures emerge from clouds of thin vertical strokes that seem to vibrate on the page. Eight heads peek from within the torqued, billowing scaffolds of color in *Fairy Queen* and *Fairy King*, both 1962. An undated work, *Untitled (purple figure)*, looks like what Aubrey Beardsley would have created on an opium comedown. Each style is distinct yet unmistakably Cameron's, and the drawings of many contemporary "goth" artists, Chloe Piene and Cameron Jamie among them, are presaged in these hallucinatory visions. The exhibition is timed to coincide with "*Semina Culture: Wallace Berman & His Circle*" (Cameron was a key member of the circle) at NYU's Grey Art Gallery, which is on view through March 31 and is also recommended.

—Brian Sholis