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Daniel Barron debuts at Pushdot Studio



Milton

[Daniel Barron's *In he Knee of the Curve*](#) at [Pushdot Studio](#) is one of the more impressive and odd rookie art shows I've seen in a while. This wipes the floor with a lot of the tamer photographic fare I often see in galleries and stumbling across it on First Thursday made the night worth while. Most are a lot wierder than they seem in my photos. Good to know the Portland art scene keeps producing interesting new artists who consistently mix dystopian and utopian visual vernaculars.

Barron, photographs body parts and fluids like water, milk etc. in a way that approximates the hyper real images in high-end food and skin care magazines. These are often extreme close-ups and the large images are clearly manipulated in a way that would make them way too creepy for such commercial use (Barron would know, he's given up a successful career on that side). These plexiglas mounted photos also have the sort of immaculate execution that holds up under such extreme close ups and that is where their uneasy Baudelarian attraction sets the hook. Barron has created a strange hybridization between genetic engineering and humanism though a series of pop art grotesques. Everyone who walked into the gallery seemed to be struck by them. Sure, they are pretty but their unrecognizable fleshiness is also a bit repelling, while the sumptous tastyness makes me feels slightly hungry (Portland is a great food city, so most gallery goers get it).

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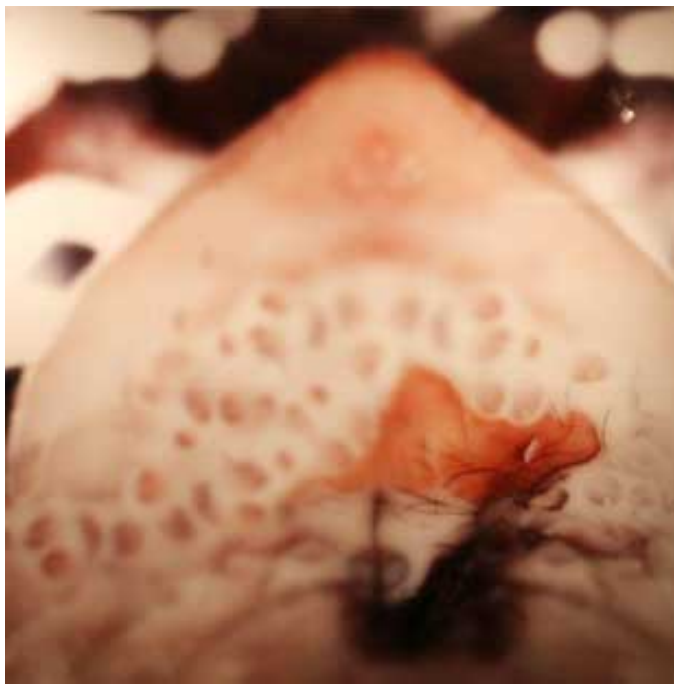
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Sliver

The initial grouping of "Boy" and "Girl" are slightly less odd and plenty familiar enough with their pink and blue backgrounds but its works like "Sliver", which take the cake with its milky/fleshy expanse that suggests a possible eye not fully revealed. Other works like "Stand" are a little too easy to figure out though and I think the extreme ambiguity of works like "Sliver" make them more rewarding. The fact that these photographs don't photograph well is another excellent sign. "Milton" is just disturbing (paradise lost?).



Daniel Barron in front of "Girl" and "Boy"

I often judge a show by how easy it is to understand when applied to previous visual experiences and nothing quite fits, a good sign. Right now this body of work exists between a cooking show, browsing an Aveda salon and watching open heart surgery.

Pushdot Studio, 830 NW 14th Ave Portland OR, 97209 Through April 1st.

Posted by [Jeff Jahn](#) on March 06, 2006 at 20:56 | [Comments \(0\)](#)

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