

Posted on Thu, May. 05, 2011

Jillian Mayer's family reunion

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Knight Arts



Some of the videos in Jillian Mayer's solo show at the David Castillo Gallery are not for the faint of heart. They aren't violent. They aren't repulsive. But, they may make you turn your head — only to turn it back again, riveted to screens revealing images that are at times hard to watch and simultaneously impossible to ignore. They make up those emotions that good art should provoke.

“I Am Your Grandma” is one example. Put on the headphones, and a lovely young woman (the artist) explains she will one day be a mother and a grandmother. The screen then fills with disturbing visages, like a twisted adult-baby, faces contorted in masks, a grandmother you would hope never to meet in your worst nightmares. Most likely, this isn't your grandmother, but for Mayer, it's a theme of motherly and grandmotherly issues that threads though “Family Matters,” the first show featured at her new gallery. What happens when we bring new life into this world? Will the view eventually be disturbing? Will it all have the gentle touch of a clichéd grandmother? Not here.

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