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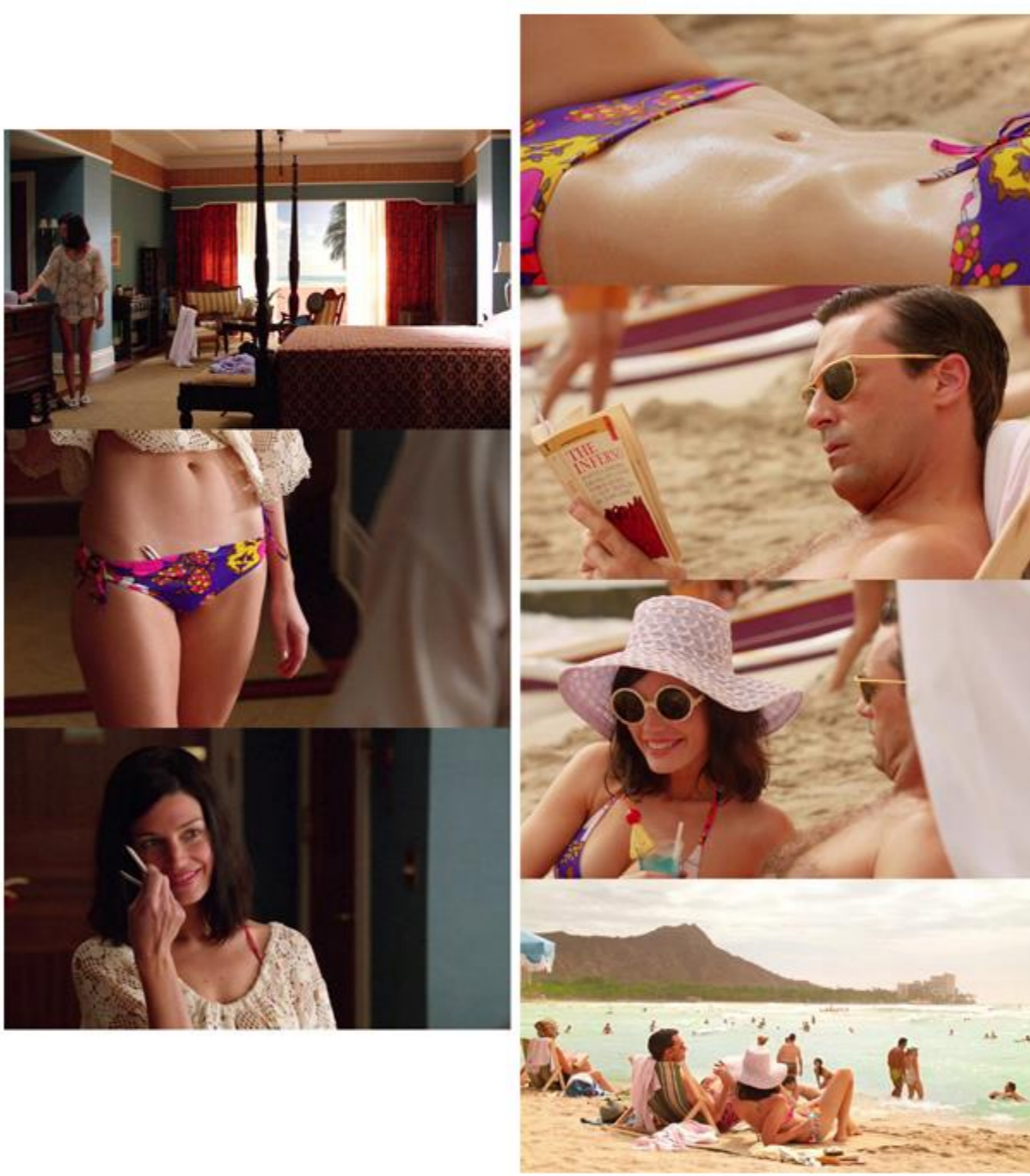
ARTIST'S NOTEBOOK:
TATIANA BERG

By Marina Gainerina | June 17, 2013 - 12:30PM

ANIMAL's feature *Artist's Notebook* asks artists to show us their original "idea sketch" next to a finished piece. This week, Brooklyn painter *Tatiana Berg's* painting inspired by *Mad Men's* Megan Draper.

I'm not an artist that believes in working with a plan. Paint doesn't lie, and I don't work from totally pre-planned sketches because you'd be able to tell right away. The act of arriving at a solution has to be real, and it can't be rehearsed.

That being said I usually have SOME idea what I'm going for — there's usually a metabolic starting point. These days I get a lot of paintings from pop culture, and I watch a lot of TV. I've basically been obsessed, for example, with the color lavender since the season six premier of *Mad Men* — it was like my brain got filled with it and needs to be purged. I was in studio the next day and all my warm-up drawings had the colors of this amazing bikini and beach cover-up Megan Draper was wearing the opening of the episode. It was an incredibly hot, unexpected combination of oranges, greens, and purples — something from another era that suddenly looked amazingly fresh.



I wasn't totally sure why I was so captivated but I impulsively decided my next 3D "tent" painting would be about Megan Draper and her bikini.



An intermediary step was stretching a small 8"x10" canvas and treating it with matte medium, just to see if these transparent, jewel tones I had been mixing and playing around with on paper would work even if they weren't against a cold white ground—a quick slap dash doodle, trying to stay loose and open.



Finally I started in on my final shaped canvas structure, layering the colors in stages, and the painting became a field. Like all my paintings I sort of just let it happen. I worked on it over the course of a couple days (unusual for me!) until the surface was crowded and teeming with marks, bursting with the heat of those bombastic colors.

I don't mind anthropomorphizing my paintings, and this one was full of the playful, youthful, optimistic personality Megan Draper had filled me with. The result was cheerful, living your life as it happens, a painting that wasn't an illustration of that idea but a physical embodiment of it.



Tatiana Berg's 3D "tent" has wheels. See the group exhibition "Dying on Stage," exploring a new kind of abstract painting coming out of Brooklyn: Young painters are ignoring the old conventions of Abstract Expressionism, taking inspiration from anything and everything on the internet and off to create addictive images. The show, featuring Tatiana Berg and four other artists, opens at *Garis and Hahn gallery* (263 Bowers, by the New Museum) this Thursday from 6 to 8 pm.

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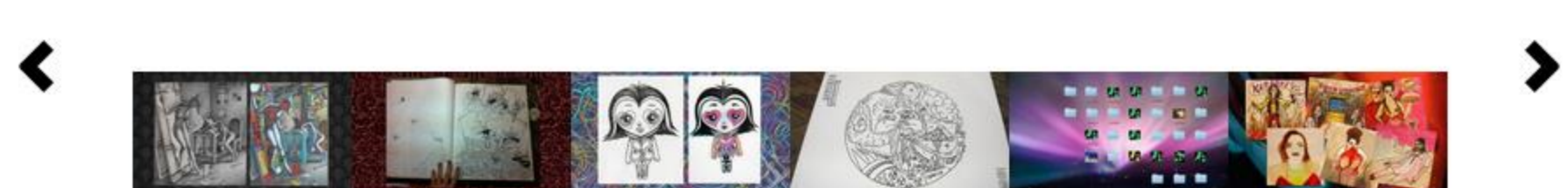
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