

# The New York Times

## Art in Review; Barbara Bloom "Takes One to Know One"

by Roberta Smith  
June 15, 2007

Barbara Bloom has operated in the gap between installation and photography for more than 20 years, raising questions about the place of art and women in society with a wry, implicitly feminine store-window elegance.

Her latest show begins with "Absence-Presence," a little tour de force of display conventions that consists of a four-way roundelay among eight objects, their shadows, related photographs and rectangles of color painted on the wall. The piece creates a poetic yet efficient cat's cradle of connections and cross-references.

Upstairs more objects, photographs of objects and mirrors that reflect both join the fray in a series of pieces that continue the absence-presence theme, while touching on the rites of confession, marriage by proxy and chickens confronted by their reflections.

In "Girls' Footprints," indentations in a gray carpet bring to a halt the fluttering movements of convent schoolgirls during recess. Ms. Bloom's work can be a little didactic and arcane, but this show still unleashes a mesmerizing sequence of riddles regarding people, things and levels of reality.