

Downs & Ross

96 Bowery, 2nd Floor, New York NY 10013

IVY HALDEMAN

Twice

May 6 - June 19, 2021

“How’s that gooey duck?”

“Crunchy.”

Emi looked down and around, following the curve of the counter scrutinizing the customers in varying stages of filling their faces with sushi, tea, and ginger. “Ouu. Let’s people watch.”

Gabriel moaned. This was one of those high school pastimes that Emi had turned into a kind of sophisticated voyeurism. Usually she did it while driving, peering into cars and speculating about the owners and passengers. Emi had a gift for fabricating the most intimate details about other people’s lives. She could easily have written for the *National Enquirer*. She also had a gift for spotting famous people in bizarre places. Emi called these *sightings*. Gabriel never recognized half of them, as famous as Emi insisted they might be. Exchanging stalls with Uma Thurman in the women’s room of the Formosa Café or reaching for sausages with Quentin Tarantino in the meat section at Hughes seemed long shots, but there was always a good story.

“Gee, Gabe,” she perked up. “Here we all are, your multicultural mosaic. There’s you and me and the gays at the end of the bar and the guy with the turban. And how about those Caucasian Japanophiles who talk real Japanese with the sushi man? Can we count them too?”

“Sure. Why not.” Gabriel felt generous.

“There’s even white people here.”

The woman sitting next to Emi turned and glared momentarily. Emi absorbed the glare like it was a tanning lamp. Gabriel looked the other way.

Emi continued, “Over there, that woman must be Persian and her friend’s gotta be Cherokee.”

“Cherokee?”

“Okay, Navajo.”

“Sorry to bust your bubble. The one you think is Persian is Chicana.”

“Hey I know a Persian when I see a Persian.”

“Chicana. I know my people, see.”

[..]

“Gabe, it’s all bullshit.”

“I know.”

“Cultural diversity is bullshit.”

Gabriel sighed. Of course it would come to this. As usual, Emi would pronounce a new sacrilege.

“Do you know what cultural diversity really is?”

“I’m thinking.”

“It’s a white guy wearing a Nirvana T-shirt and dreads. That’s cultural diversity. Emi looked up at the sushi chef. “Don’t you hate being multicultural?” she asked.

“Excuse me?”

The woman next to Emi bristled under her silk blouse and handcrafted silver. She looked apologetically at the sushimaker and said, “Hiro-san, having a hard day?”

“Hiro,” Emi butted back in. “I hate being multicultural.”

“Can’t you calm down?” The woman never looked at Emi, but offered up a patronizing smile for Hiro-san. “we’re trying to enjoy our tea. By the way, Hiro-san, it’s just delicious today.”

“See what I mean, Hiro? You’re invisible. I’m invisible. We’re all invisible. It’s just tea, ginger, raw fish, and a credit card.”

“Whatever is your problem?”

Gabriel knew better than to introduce more ammunition. He said plainly, “I’d like a California roll.”

The woman went on. “I happen to adore the Japanese culture. What can I say? I adore different cultures. I’ve traveled all over the world. I love living in L.A. because I can find anything in the world to eat, right here. It’s such a meeting place for all sorts of people. A true celebration of an international world. It just makes me sick to hear people speak so cynically about something so positive and to make assumptions about people based on their color. Really, I’m sorry. I can’t understand your attitude at all.”

Emi stared into a compact mirror and reapplied a glossy layer of red lipstick before she turned around in her seat to meet her sushi bar neighbor in her full frontal glory.

“Emi—” Gabriel felt a sudden panic.

Emi sighed. She noticed the woman’s hair was held together miraculously by two ornately-lacquered chopsticks. Maybe there was some precedent for this hairdo. Gabriel later remembered something about Oedipus blinding himself with his mother’s hairpins. Not an Asian myth however.

Downs & Ross

96 Bowery, 2nd Floor, New York NY 10013

Emi said, "Hiro, could we have two forks, please?"

Hiro quickly motioned and signaled for the occidental eating utensils.

Emi examined the forks carefully and held them up for her neighbor. "Would you consider using these in your hair? Or would you consider that," Emi paused, "unsanitary?"

The woman blanched. Gabriel missed chomping into his California roll. For some reason, the entire sushi bar seemed to tilt and sag with an indescribable elasticity. Gabriel's elbow lost its surface, and that seaweed, rice, crab, and avocado delicacy tumbled and tumbled.

— Karen Tei Yamashita, *Tropic of Orange*, (Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 2nd. ed., 2017), pp. 109-112.

Ivy Haldeman (b. 1985, Aurora, CO; lives and works in New York) gained her BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in 2008. Selected solo exhibitions: Downs & Ross, New York; Francois Ghebaly, Los Angeles; Capsule, Shanghai. Selected group exhibitions: Petzel Gallery, New York; Downs & Ross, New York; Hauser & Wirth, New York; Fredericks & Freiser, New York; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, Netherlands; Gavin Brown's Enterprise, Hancock, NY; Reyes Projects, Birmingham, MI; Arsenal Contemporary, New York; and Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York.

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

First Room (counter-clockwise from sign-in)

Two Suits, Cuffs Crossed, Leaning on Elbows, Sitting with Arm Back (Smalt, Blue Horizontal)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
67 × 60 inches / 170 × 152 cm

Twice Colossus, Head Leans Left, Pinky Up, Head Leans Right (Gaze)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
83^{1/2} × 57^{1/2} inches / 212 × 146 cm

Two Suits, Face to Face, Cuff Grasped (Smalt, Red)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
67 × 60 inches / 170 × 152 cm

Full Figure, Head Leans on Bun Edge, Leg Akimbo, Bottom Enfolded
2021

Acrylic on canvas
57^{1/2} × 83^{1/2} inches / 146 × 212 cm

Hand, Sitting, Index Crossed Over Middle
2021

Acrylic on canvas
24 × 16^{1/2} inches / 61 × 41.9 cm

Hallway

Aperture, Full Figure, Back Forward, Shins Cross
Velvet, epoxy, acrylic, LED lighting, brass wire, wood, plastic
Dimensions variable

Second Room (clockwise from entry)

Two Suits, Sitting, Cuff to Lapel, Belly Down, Shoulders Tilt (Red, Blue Horizontal)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
67 × 60 inches / 170 × 152 cm

Twice Colossus, Index to Index, Thumb to Thumb, Glance Back (Diamond)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
83^{1/2} × 57^{1/2} inches / 212 × 146 cm

Twice Colossus, Index Finger to Opposite Thumb, Eye Framed, Wrist Bent (Rectangle)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
83^{1/2} × 57^{1/2} inches / 212 × 146 cm

Twice Colossus, Four Hands Touch, Palms Apart, Buns Press Slightly
2021

Acrylic on canvas
83^{1/2} × 57^{1/2} inches / 212 × 146 cm

Two Suits, Step Forward, Point, Cuff Behind Back (Smalt, Blue)
2021

Acrylic on canvas
67 × 60 inches / 170 × 152 cm