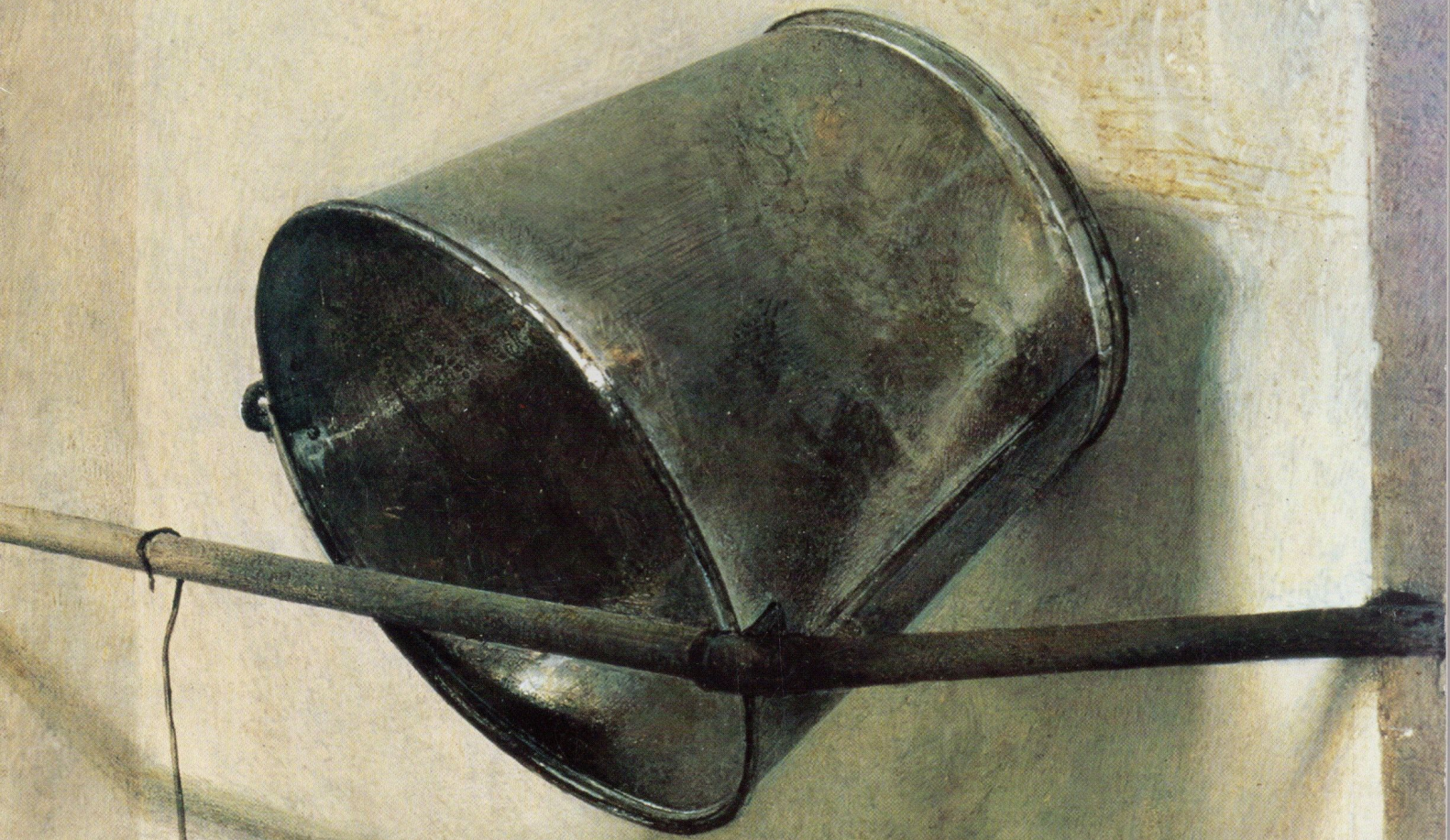


ARTnews

OCTOBER 2005

ANDREW WYETH



Sentimental or Sophisticated?

A New View of Matisse

Absolutely Fabulist: Artists Take on Fairy Tales

The Money Trail: Investigating the Getty



Ambreen Butt

Kustera Tilton

The title of this delightful Lilliputian-scale epic is “I Need a Hero,” but, in fact, this series of paintings has a more than able heroine on hand—the artist herself.

In her first New York solo show, Pakistan-born, Boston-based Ambreen Butt, who was trained in the exacting tradition of Indian and Persian miniature painting, made herself her own subject. While each picture—watercolor and gouache on paper—exists in its own right, the exhibition’s dozen album-size works followed the format of a picaresque novel, with the ponytailed, sweatpants-clad adventuress tilting with blue-skinned demons, fire-breathing dragons, and other real and mythological beasts. With her lariat beautifully swirled or her curved scimitar at the ready, Butt lops off heads, tails, and spiny wings, unfazed by ferocious jaws and gnashing teeth as she sets off to conquer all that impedes her progress.

The irresistably delicate and small



Ambreen Butt, *Untitled*, 2005, watercolor, white gouache, and gold leaf on Wasli paper, 10¼" x 8¼".

Kustera Tilton.

paintings act like stills from an action movie, only they're more ravishing, with intricate figurations, flamboyant patterns, and brilliant colors set off by gold leaf; most contain several scenes in one frame. A few of the works layer translucent Mylar on paper, superimposing painted figures over merely outlined ones, stitched in thread, adding a note of handi-craft to the swashbuckling.

Butt stakes her own distinctive claim to the genre that mixes motifs from East and West. In her version of magic realism, Butt's fantasies are based on the real struggles, fears, and confusion that a traditional Pakistani artist and woman faces in the divide between cultures as she searches for identity in the contemporary world. By the look of things, however, our heroine has become the hero she always wanted to be. —*Lilly Wei*

Margaret Evangeline

Stux and Elizabeth Moore

Fine Art

The show "Shot Through: New Paintings" at Stux—electroplated stainless-steel plates blasted with bullet holes—tantalized and shocked both eye and psyche. A pile of shell casings at the gallery's entrance (mementoes to be pocketed by visitors) was a reminder of the firepower directed at the gleaming, mirrored surfaces pocked with graphic