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Pagel, David. "Mayhem, table for 1: Artist Kim Dingle, Fatty's restaurant and her 'Lost Supper' paintings." *www.latimes.com (Los Angeles Times)*, 18 March 2019.

Los Angeles Times



"Studies for the Last Supper at Fatty's (Wine Bar for Children II)" by Kim Dingle, 2007. Oil on vellum framed in powder-coated welded aluminum, 77.25 by 243.5 inches. (Jeff McLane / Kim Dingle and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects)

Fourteen years ago, Kim Dingle was worried that she had lost her touch. She had good reason to. Having turned her Eagle Rock painting studio into Fatty's & Co. restaurant, she spent just about every minute running it with her partner, Aude Charles. Both were novices to the food service industry. Needless to say, Dingle had little time to pick up a paintbrush.

So she bought a stack of vellum sheets, each the size of a sketchbook page, and set out to make one little painting at a time, hoping to work her way, like an athlete, back to the top of her game. Within 10 minutes, that plan had gone out the window.

Dingle discovered she hadn't lost her touch. Even better, she realized that her break from painting had renewed her love of dipping a bristle-tipped stick in gooey pigment and smearing it across flat surfaces. That love was accompanied by confidence and joy, embodied in whiplash gestures whose verve and nuance were intensified by the keen-eyed compositions into which Dingle wrestled them.

She covered hundreds of vellum sheets with her loose-gestured pictures, painting swarms of ferocious little girls wreaking havoc in their Sunday best — guzzling wine, playing with their food, tipping over tables and burying their faces in frosting-covered cakes. Damn-the-consequences mayhem never looked better. Nor was more infectious.

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“No I.D.” by Kim Dingle, 2007. Oil on mylar, 72 by 96 inches (Jeff McLane / Kim Dingle and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects)



“And Cake” by Kim Dingle, 2007. Oil on canvas 73.5 by 61.5 by 1.5 inches (Jeff McLane / Kim Dingle and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects)

Dingle then shipped half of the vellum sheets to New York, where they were exhibited at Sperone Westwater gallery in “Studies for the Last Supper at Fatty’s.” She stashed the rest away — in pizza boxes. With a restaurant to run, Dingle forgot about them.

Last year, she rediscovered her stash while cleaning out a back room. It wasn’t exactly Marie Kondo’s version of decluttering, but it will spark joy for visitors to “I Will Be Your Server: The Lost Supper Paintings” at Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects in Culver City.

Dingle’s rollicking, four-gallery extravaganza includes 12 multi-panel paintings on vellum and nine large paintings on canvas (made between 2005 and 2007) plus five wine bottles (2013) on which she has painted miniature little girls, all running amok.

Dingle tells truths about childhood while pulling the rug out from established ideas about femininity, race relations in the United States and art’s place at the table. Violence, pleasure and morality figure prominently in Dingle’s contemporary parable about the power of real innocence and how it gets channeled — and corrupted — by grown-ups.

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A 40-panel painting, which measures more than 6 feet tall and 40 feet long, anchors the first gallery. “Studies for the Last Supper at Fatty’s (Wine Bar for Children II)” recalls Da Vinci’s famous painting, except that Dingle’s depicts 10 plump girls bellied up to a bar, their white-pantied backsides facing viewers.

Dingle’s unsupervised girls get into more mischief in other works on vellum. They behave like frat guys in “Forced Riesling,” like anonymous fans at sporting events or political rallies in “No I.D.,” like angry adolescents in “Table Tipping,” like entitled adults in “Watermelon Martini” and like overworked laborers in “The Lost Supper (janitorials).”

The paint handling in Dingle’s oils on canvas is less reckless, slower and steadier. It makes for paintings that feel fleshier and less frenetic, as if they took place the morning after the party.

Time doesn’t stand still in Dingle’s sensuous paintings so much as it whirlpools into an ever-tightening — and ever-expanding — vortex. Simultaneously inescapable and irresistible, her exhibition makes room for ambivalence.

Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects, 6006 Washington Blvd., Culver City. Tuesdays-Saturdays, through April 13.



“The Lost Supper (janitorials)” by Kim Dingle, 2006, 72 by 72 inches (Jeff McLane / Kim Dingle and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects)



“The Lost Supper (general maintenance)” by Kim Dingle, 2006. Oil on mylar, 90 by 72 inches (Jeff McLane / Kim Dingle and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects)