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CALIFORNIA'S LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2012





Artist Carin Gerard in her studio.

SANTA BARBARA

## Second Nature

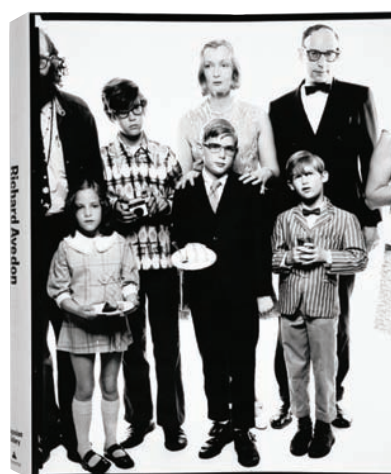
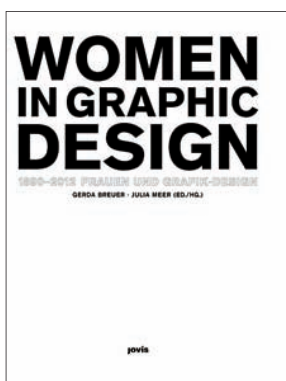
One talented California artist harnesses the quiet power of the botanical world

For a creator like Carin Gerard, a limited palette of black, white, gray and umber offers endless possibilities to translate the gifts of nature. In her latest solo exhibition (Oct. 6–Nov. 3 at S.C.A.P.E.), “Organic Origins,” the Montecito-based painter has re-imagined flowers, seashells and butterflies in subdued hues using a near-monochromatic technique called *grisaille* (rooted in *gris*, the French word for gray). With detailing worthy of classical realism, the works also have a relief effect—a sculptural quality that makes objects on canvas feel tangible. “I focused on the intricate, subtle beauty of contrast,” says Gerard. Highlights and shadows of leaves, wings and shells become dramatic, volumetric forms.

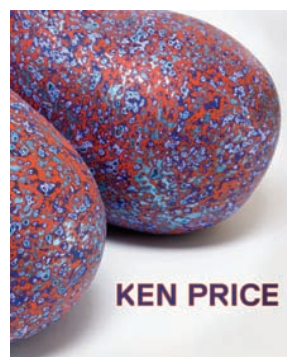
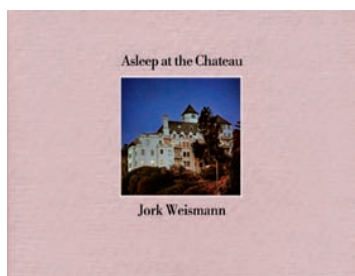
The project forced her to return to the fundamentals of her training in Italy, where she studied under Charles H. Cecil at his famed Florentine atelier and lived in a 19th-century Chianti farmhouse. Gerard revisited the essence of *chiaroscuro*—the thrill of opposition. “I have to be able to read color values, and read them well, to create the dynamic interplay of dark and light,” she says. Using precise objects in her studio, pretty is never her goal; she strives for sensual, powerful and unexpected. “My hope is that people will first see the pop of the image, then slow down to interpret its drama.” *Southern California Art Projects & Exhibitions*, 2859 East Coast Hwy., Corona del Mar; [scapesite.com](http://scapesite.com); [caringerard.com](http://caringerard.com).

## ART FIX

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CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Milk and Honey, Contemporary Art in California (Ammo, \$40). Women in Graphic Design (Jovis/DAP, \$55). Avedon: Murals & Portraits (Gagosian/Abrams, \$100). Marco Anelli: Portraits in the Presence of Marina Abramovic (Damiani/DAP, \$40). Ken Price Sculpture, (LACMA/Prestel, \$75). Drawing Surrealism (LACMA/Prestel, \$60). Jork Weismann: Asleep at the Chateau (Damiani/DAP, \$50).



CARIN GERARD: WRITTEN BY HOLLY RICHMOND; PORTRAIT BY HEIDI BASSETT BLAIR