

Clive Smith

Marlborough

Clive Smith's portrait paintings in the show "different but the same" were a provocative study of the relationship that develops between artist and model. For

with and without Jennifer for 33 weeks (2004)—30 oil-on-wood panels installed in a wavelike pattern along one wall—Smith, playing the role of artist-psychologist, met with his model one night a week for a three-hour session. At each meeting, he painted her head from the same viewpoint but subtly altered the flow of her hair, the fullness of her cheeks, her coloring. Sometimes she seems withdrawn; other times, she stares incisively at the viewer.

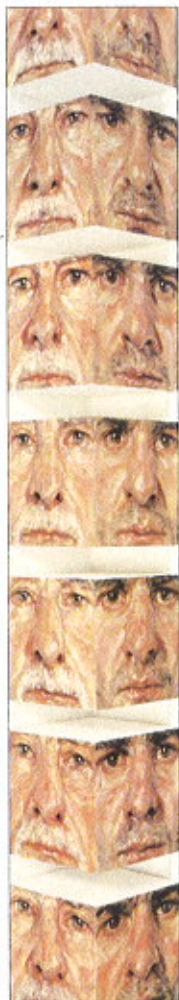
Most of the models Smith used were pictured against a white ground, free of appurtenances. For *John x 3 over 9 months* (2003), the artist and the model—who is shown from the waist up, nude, with splotchy skin—met for 15 three-hour sessions, and the resulting triptych reveals the artist's increasingly penetrating eye. Smith flatters neither himself nor his models; in exploring the

range of human emotions, he reveals the delicacy as well as the grotesqueness of the flesh.

In the "Jennifer" paintings, the sessions the model missed are signified by empty spaces in the arrangement of the paintings. *11 paintings of Skye* (2003–4) begins in a loose pattern and becomes more gridlike, showing the model's greater diligence and interest in the sittings.

In *December 2004, Self Portrait*, Smith arranged 31 paintings in the calendar layout for that month, documenting the passage of time and, like On Kawara, playing with the idea of memory. In *June 2004 with my father*, 30 cubes installed in a corner showed Smith's face on one side and his father's on the other—a poignant reflection on time, decay, and mortality.

—Sandra Ban



Clive Smith, *June 2004 with my father* (detail), 30 oil-on-wood blocks, each 3" x 3". Marlborough.

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