

# The New York Times

## Kate Gilmore

Smith-Stewart  
53 Stanton Street, near Forsyth  
Street, Lower East Side  
Through Jan. 18

Kate Gilmore has ideas of her own about site-specific video installation and sexual stereotypes. Entering her New York solo debut requires stepping through large holes in two closely set temporary walls. You can pause between them and watch Ms. Gilmore in the video "Walk This Way" as she kicks and claws her way through the very wall you are about to step through. She wears a demure dark-gray dress with heels. The silk flower in her hair matches the magenta of one of the walls.

Ms. Gilmore makes a point of dressing like a lady, color-coordination included, in all her short, methodical videos. Then she goes against type, parodying the task-oriented, implicitly macho Process Art pieces and performances of the early 1970s. Richard Serra in an ironworker's mask and gloves throwing molten lead comes to mind, and like him, she rarely shows her face.

In "Between a Hard Place," another video, she wears a black dress and gloves as she bashes through five gray walls to reach one that's pale yellow, a color cued to and by her matching yellow heels. In "Down the House" she climbs onto an unstable stack of old furniture and white plaster blocks strung with pink plastic police ribbon and proceeds to smash them to smithereens with a sledgehammer. Her hair ribbon is pink, of course.

"Higher Horse" affirms the traditional division of labor. Ms. Gilmore maintains her balance atop a precarious pile of plaster blocks while two men wielding sledgehammers reduce her pedestal to rubble.

There is a focused, thought-through quality to Ms. Gilmore's exercises in destruction; this gives them clarity, despite the noise and mounting chaos. They reprise early-1970s feminism and Post-Minimalism with an unexpected addition of formalist satire in her use of color, as well as in the punctured monochromes and the flattened pedestals.

Somehow it is not surprising to learn that Ms. Gilmore studied at the School of Visual Arts with Jackie Winsor, who made her name in the early 1970s with strapping, tough minded sculptures, even as Mr. Serra did.

ROBERTA SMITH

