

## KANTOR / FEUER GALLERY

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## TOEING THE LINE

Simone Shubuck's fanciful drawings are irreverently intriguing

**C**ollectors of Simone Shubuck's swirling, feverishly wrought mixed-media drawings—who include Libertine designer Cindy Greene, socialite Renée Rockefeller, and the Museum of Modern Art (which recently purchased some of her work)—might be surprised to discover that the Buffalo native actually turned to art as plan B after stubbing a toe on her first passion. As a young ballerina, Shubuck agonized over her failure to live up to the gazellelike feminine ideal she now refers to as a “mindf-k.” So she began sitting in the corner of the dance studio—a teen Degas with a sneer and a sketch pad. (One early piece was the Danskin logo with an elephant's head grafted on top.)

Shubuck continued to engage and to subvert her “girly” impulses while studying at the San Francisco Art Institute, tagging back alleys with graffiti of skirts and bunnies. The scene “was such a boys’ club,” says the 36-year-old. “I wanted to make art as cute as possible.” Similarly, the psychedelic filigrees of line and erasure that have so beguiled the art world explode with such dear-diary mainstays as birds, baubles, and plenty of flowers.

On view this month at Los Angeles’ Kantor/Feuer Gallery, Shubuck’s work has recently become more figurative, referencing Schiele and Klimt. But the artist owes a greater debt to her maternal grandmother and great-grandmother, Russian immigrants who “did everything from scratch,” from baking to embroidery. “I don’t like to get too literal about the meaning of the work,” says

**art**

Shubuck, who moonlights as a floral designer for hot New York restaurants Babbo and Felidia. “For me, it’s intuitive, a sort of monastic activity. It’s just what life is about.” —AARON GELL



Gell, Aaron. "Toeing the Line", Elle, December 2005, p. 174