



*Wildwoman*, 2012. Graphite and oil on panel, 20" x 15".

# Rebecca Morgan

## CABIN FEVER

April 12 - May 26, 2012

**Asya Geisberg Gallery** is pleased to present *Cabin Fever*, an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Rebecca Morgan. Morgan creates a collection of characters and types, a cross between Brueghel's stylized peasants, R. Crumb's winking harlots, "Deliverance", and the inbred mutants of many a horror flick. Morgan takes her background in rural Appalachia as the point of origin for her personae - as they become uncultured tourists, or, especially in her self-portraits, expatriate interlopers ambivalently negotiating their depiction. Morgan's more exotic rednecks inhabit a rural America where people exist intimately and potently with the wilderness, a relationship which urbanites can only smirk at and envy. Nature is either wistfully idyllic - the idyl found in a margarine ad - or the scene of demonically perverse debauchery.

Morgan's style fluctuates between hyper-detailed naturalism, reminiscent of Dutch painters such as Memling and Van Eyck, and cartoonish caricature, which pushes the imagery to a ridiculous, repulsive, even absurd dimension. Jagged teeth, furry brows, corpulent bodies symbolic of sloth and over-indulgence, and a general air of dirty unkemptness all exploit the demonization of the Appalachian. Internal traits come to the surface, and while Morgan exorcizes her country folk's demons, ridicule mixes with pride and defiant celebration. In her alternately tender and aggressive depictions of herself, she bares all - a metaphoric exposure of her former rural character, or to prod the viewer to question their own position.

Morgan reveres Frans Hals' paintings of happy peasants and Adrien Brouwer's fighting, laughing, and drunk lower classes. Similarly, her symbolic language and character types recall Dutch parables, which were meant to both entertain and teach a lesson to the middle- and upper-class patrons of such works. Morgan plays an intricate game of back-and-forth accusations: she panders to the same stereotypes that she herself contends with, and in a modern twist, acknowledges that she is laughing at the subject, the viewer, and our contemporary conflict of pining for a pre-cultural back-to-the-land utopia while sipping our Starbucks.

**Rebecca Morgan** is originally from Pennsylvania, and currently lives and works in Brooklyn. Morgan received a BA from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, and an MFA from Pratt Institute, NY. Morgan's solo exhibition "Where I Have Lived and What I Lived For" opened in 2010 at Gasser Grunert Gallery, and she has been included in exhibitions at Richard Heller Gallery, Montclair State University, and the Art Los Angeles Contemporary Fair. This will be the artist's first exhibition with the gallery.