

# whitehot magazine

of contemporary art

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## whitehot | Nina Bovasso, Bravin Lee Programs, New York



*Nina Bovasso, Her Name was Lola, 2006, acrylic, ink and watercolor on paper, 50x40 inches, Images Courtesy Bravin Lee Programs, New York*

### BOTANIZING ON THE ASPHALT

by Hellin Kay, whitehot, New York

One can't help but be immediately drawn into Nina Bovasso's paintings, whether the works are on canvas or paper, as is the case with this current exhibition, "Botanizing on The Asphalt".

Ms. Bovasso's botanically inspired bursts of color are not just delicious pieces of eye candy as one may conclude upon first viewing, but a maniacal glimpse into the persistent noise that at times fills the mind with crazed and wanderlust musings.

The works are beautifully rendered and their brightly colored strands and layers are created to a joyful and iridescent effect. While some may write the work off as 'girly' or 'feminine' the paintings betray something deeper and darker beneath the surface of the initial explosive, jump-for-joy color.

Mixed in with the color saturated flowers and botany are dark and deeply defined blacks and blues that contrast the hyper hilarity you feel initially. The implication is of something more sinister, with a somewhat manic-depressive undercurrent. It is deceitfully playful and light, only briefly allowing you to imagine what may really lie beneath the happy and joyfully obsessive façade.

Sometimes it is easy to imagine the artist behind the work as a young girl, sitting alone in her room, blasting her Sonic Youth, fantasizing about

the adventures ahead. Then adolescent angst and its mandatory chains finally set her free to explore the world she knows is out there somewhere.

**E**ach work maintains its initial obsession with color and energy and the paintings are definitely fun and easy to look at. However the work not only requires a second look but, also, a second thought.

“Untitled #3,” a multi-layered fusion of red and black doodle-inspired flowers, overlap a myriad of small rainbows & colorful lines and are contrasted by the darker shapes in the background, creating an almost musical effect. With “Her Name Was Lola,” Ms. Bovasso covers almost every inch of the paper’s surface with a variety of undulating shapes and sizes, neon colored petals and stems bursting off the edges.

**W**orking in a variety of acrylic mediums, watercolors, gouache and ink, Ms. Bovasso creates a color infused symphony of lines, dots and shapes in all forms. For Ms. Bovasso, who uses nature as an inspiration, botany is not only the departure point of the current work but also the inherent implication of continual change implicit to the natural world we find all around us.

The current works on display were done while Ms. Bovasso was an Artist-in-Residence at the University of Georgia, in Athens, GA.

**B**orn in New York City, Nina Bovasso has exhibited widely, this is her first solo show at Bravin Lee Programs. She received her MFA from Bard College and her BA from the San Francisco Art Institute.

<http://www.bravinlee.com>

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