ARTFORUM

Critic's Pick: Amie Dicke
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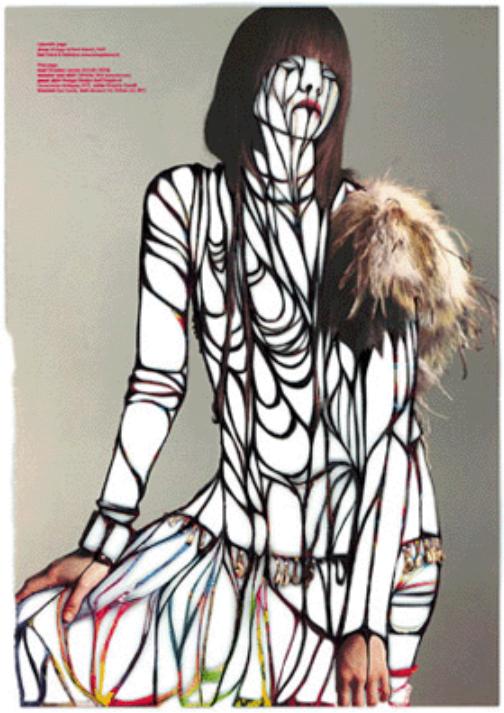

***Belt*, 2004**

In her New York solo debut, Amie Dicke unleashes the common impulse to attack the hyperreal images of women that surround us, deploying a sophistication that is not about dismantling the idealized body but about carving it, displacing its volume with linear lace. Taking her X-acto knife to bus-stop posters and fashion spreads, she creates haunting web-like women who seem to snake up from the bottom of the page (and are always capped by an untouched head of hair). Dicke may or may not have been one of those teenagers who compulsively cuts images from magazines and pastes them to a wall or scrapbook, but here she carries this common adolescent fetish behavior into new territory. The weight and constructed syntax of the collage is replaced by negative space, and the works move away from the literal body. If Lucio Fontana's concetto spaziale seek to open up space beyond the canvas, Dicke's slices open up the body from within, dissecting it into smaller and more fragile pieces. The literal and metaphorical carving-out of somatic space points towards projects like Eleanor Antin's 1972 Carving: A Traditional Sculpture. We are back at the female body as sculptural material to be manipulated and molded. Dicke's work lands at the intersection of collage, sculpture, feminist intervention, and fashion. Whichever path you take, its instinctual, almost primal qualities assure that it will fascinate.