

 **Tuesday, 17 October 2006**

Wouldn't it be nice!

Soviet poster art never looked so revolutionary, futurist and fun as when Benedict Ernst painted them. That is because Benedict Ernst is not a soviet poster painter – he is a chocolate revolutionary artist.

The Chocolate Revolution by Benedict Ernst is a touring exhibition of public art (from Sydney Mc17 Public Art Space in the McKell Building to Melbourne's Platform 2 under Flinders St. A middle aged male commuter giggles at the display and goes to read the manifesto as I am taking my notes on the exhibition. This is very successful public art – it creates an idea that some women dream about.

The crumpled pages of the chocolate manifesto on display are signed by Howard Roark. This introduces a new direction of political fiction to the work from left to right. Howard Roark is the gifted architect in Ayn Rand's novel Fountainhead, played by Gary Cooper in the movie.

Although at first glance the graphic scenes of factories and happy workers looks like Soviet poster art. There are a few things that distinguish chocolate revolutionary art from Soviet poster painting, all the bats, gold leaf, the chocolates and workers wearing noise protectors and respirators. And the slogans are subtly: along with "Viva la Revolution" there is "Viva Love".

Last year Benedict Ernst was exhibiting chocolate respirators (that partially explains the respirators featured in many of the images of happy workers). And now he is exhibiting more chocolate objects: life sized chocolate Molitoff cocktails, broken bottles, bricks, rocks and hammers (but no sickles). Benedict Ernst has also exhibited his collection of happy meal toys, and chocolate wrappers in glass cases. Those chocolate wrappers would have been useful in making the paintings for the current exhibition.

The chocolate revolution has been packaged. The chocolate objects are carefully supported in cardboard forms that are negative shapes of the objects. Not all of the negative spaces are full. Where is this revolutionary mass of chocolate? There is motivation for imagination in this exhibition but it is art snack food, it is all parody and comedy.

Although Benedict Ernst has worked extensively with chocolate he has yet to learn the dark art of the chocolatier: how to temper chocolate. The untempered chocolate that Benedict Ernst creates his cast objects with has a dull surface whereas tempered chocolate has the familiar shiny surface of chocolate.

Filed under: **None** | Posted by Holsworth Mark at **Tuesday, 17 October 2006 11:01 PM**
1 comment(s)

 **Sunday, 15 October 2006**

Street Art Uncut Reviewed

Matthew Lunn Street Art Uncut (Craftsman House, 2006) documents Melbourne's street art scene with lots of pictures and some text. The text is well written and covers both individual artists and all aspects of street art from tags to street