

## whitehot | October 2010, Ebony G. Patterson @ See Line Gallery

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*Ebony G. Patterson, Fashion Ova' Style - Installaton view, 2010  
Courtesy of the artist and See Line Gallery*

### Ebony G. Patterson: Fashion Ova' Style

[See Line Gallery](#)

Pacific Design Center

Sept 15 through Nov. 11th, 2010

Ebony G. Patterson lives and works in Jamaica. She also lives and works in Kentucky - a city better known for its prized thoroughbred horses than for its innovative young artists. This is par for the course for Patterson, whose unique vision encompasses a wide range of techniques and materials including mixed media painting, tapestries, installation and works on paper, and she is certainly not afraid to push the envelope. She titles her works after specific Jamaican colloquialisms - including show itself, *Fashion Ova' Style* derives from Jamaica's Dancehall culture and is used to describe a sense of daring and imagination in contrast to the 'stylishly ordinary'. In doing so, Patterson forges an endlessly fluid relationship between contrived notions of fashion and the strange vulnerability that defines human experience.

Works like *Wi Oh So Clean - From the Fambily* (2010) exemplify the relationship between artifice and reality as Patterson stages her figures in bizarrely garish, artificially rendered situations that appear deliberately staged. Patterson's photographic images are printed directly into the fabric of the tapestries, making them that much richer, strangely compelling and complicated, their outlandishness deriving mainly from the tension between the known and the imagined, especially in terms of gender ideation. Patterson's men wear diamonds and rubies, gold chains and red sparkly shoes that would put even Dorothy to shame, yet within this overt gesture is a sensitivity to the complexity of human experience. These men are not asking to be loved or admired, but proclaim themselves as self-loving, freewheeling, sexuality biomorphic heroes for whom anything is possible.

Patterson's work breaks with tradition at every turn, yet much like artists such as Lyle Ashton Harris, the photographic image becomes its own means of historic construction, both of the private and the public personae - a knotty fusion of seductive beauty and sharp sociopolitical observation. Works like *Cultural Soliloquy-Cultural Object Revised II* (2010) an automobile covered with tapestries, exist here as complicated visual symbols layered with data, that leave us as viewers to connect the shiny, ruby-red dots. Patterson is equitable with both the visual content and implied metaphoric meaning inherent in these works, and it is her playfulness and sense of humor that ultimately make the pieces so damn alluring.

Works like *Untitled Shoe Project* are once again incredibly seductive and playful, but also call to mind the implicit history of the shoe as

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an object of desire. Throughout history shoes have been used to define a person's social status and cultural respectability, and Patterson's series further reclaims the shoe as a vessel of decadence and artifice, bringing to mind the royal classes of Europe during the fifteen and sixteen hundreds when the upper classes decorated their shoes with brocades, feathers, flowers, jewels, silver and gold filaments to attract attention and delineate social standing. One has the sense that Patterson's shoes might have lightening bolts built into the soles as she is clearly on fire here!



Eve Wood is both a critic and an artist. She was represented for five years by Western Project and before that at Susanne Vielmetter; Los Angeles Projects. She has exhibited her work at numerous galleries including Angles Gallery, The Huntington Beach Museum of Art, The Weatherspoon Museum of Art etc. Her art criticism has appeared in many magazines including Flash Art, Artnet.com, Tema Celeste, NY Arts, Angelino Magazine, Art Papers, Bridge, ArtUS, Art Papers, Artweek, Latin Arts.com, Art Review and Artillery. She is also the author of five books of poetry and one novel.

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