Chelsea now

Colette

Rambling Rose: Thank God I'm Still Here

By Rose Hartman

Downtown doyenne and culture chronicler Rose Hartman has documented the worlds of art and fashion in New York and across the globe for more than three decades. Here, she offers her best-of picks for where to see and be seen around town.

For more than three decades, I have followed the career of the artist Colette (like Prince, her single name is sufficient.) I recall her fearlessly painting enormous lips on W. 57th St. before the police briefly detained her; lying on a bed in a seductive, silky tableaux at the Robert Stefanotti Gallery; playing in her band at the stylish boutique Fiorucci; appearing nearly bare-breasted in the windows of the Rizzoli Bookstore; and using creamy parachute silk to transform her spacious Pearl St. loft into a poetic environment. Unfortunately, her loft was destroyed in 2007 before she could remove her artwork and records.

Attired in outrageous hats, dramatic makeup, striking original clothing and tottering on platform shoes, Colette moves confidently through the city—often under the guise of a notorious or fictional figure, from Mata Hari to Frida Kahlo.Unlike her baroque, multimedia works that have been widely exhibited in Berlin, Rome and Tokyo, Colette's latest collection at Destination NY, "Metaphysical Portraits," features more minimal pieces. As one of her paintings stated, "Thank God I'm still here!"—and she most definitely is. Destination NY, 32 Little W.12th St., through March 9.