

# THE Arts

MARCH 17, 2007

## Oh, Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall, Who's the Naughtiest of Them All?

It's hard to know whether Ann Liv Young immediately sheds her performing self after her shows or goes home to Google herself incessantly, searching for (hopefully outrageous) mention of her anti-erotic spectacles.

### DANCE REVIEW

CLAUDIA  
LA ROCCO

No doubt Ms. Young's work has created a buzz. Her "Michael," staged in 2005, opened with four topless women dancing to an Eminem song while a man in a white suit watched through a window and masturbated. Now just 26, she has developed an intriguingly ambiguous persona, at once tauntingly tedious and irritatingly captivating. This persona hits you full force in "Snow White," which opened on Wednesday

### Snow White

The Kitchen

night to a packed crowd at the Kitchen.

Ms. Young's reimagining of the tale features plenty of sexual activity, a host of pop songs and three performers who move in and out of character, debasing themselves and one another to knowing laughs from the audience. It's 2007, after all, and the very idea of performance art meant to shock seems rather quaint.

It's hard to know what fires up Ms. Young, but it's not outrage. And it's not titillation, to judge by the hideously unflattering costumes. (The pairing of white leotard with black high-top sneaker is particularly breathtaking.)

Ms. Young has twisted this bedtime story into a sort of fairy tale of self that spills out in a messy, propstrewn space, bordered on three sides by walls of hanging white streamers. Liz Santoro and Michael Guerrero serve mostly as Ms. Young's foils, even when — or perhaps especially when — Ms. Santoro, almost nude, is on top of her. Ms. Young's Snow White is tawdry and cynical, with dead-fish eyes and a penchant for peevishly yelled commands and asides.

As in previous works, she exerts overt control, shouting counts for rudimentary movement and halting actions on a whim.

"Snow White" runs through next Saturday at the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, Chelsea; (212) 255-5793 or [thekitchen.org](http://thekitchen.org)



Julie Lemberger for The New York Times

Watch out, dwarfs: Ann Liv Young in the title role of "Snow White."

### A fairy tale heroine sheds her sweet aura (and quite a bit more).

"I can't," she whines at one point, throwing herself onto the white stage after she and Ms. Santoro, naked and wearing masks, have charged forward while stabbing themselves with foil swords hard enough to leave red welts.

"Never get pregnant by a retard," she adds, motioning to Mr. Guerrero.

Clearly, this ain't your grandmother's storybook heroine. But a kind of nostalgia is at work here, at least in the songs from the likes of Michael Jackson, Pat Benatar and Beyoncé, played loud and sung to by the cast. The audience has heard these songs before; it has seen this type of work before. Yet Ms. Young makes you think about it again, if only to wonder if the price of admission was a swindle or a steal.

It's possible that she planted the audience members who walked out toward the end, but if not, she should hire them. Whatever it takes to add to the disaffection.