

NEW YORK OBSERVER

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July in December? **Karen Finley, *move over!*** Meet Portland, Ore.-based performance artist (and limpid-eyed babe)



Miranda July, 27, who's booked for the 2002 Whitney Biennial. We found her in a Troy, N.Y., Best Western feverishly preparing for the New York premiere tonight of her latest work, *The Swan Tool*—named for an object used to jimmy cars when

people lock their keys in them. "That's a job I used to have before I became an *artist*," she told us. How's the show coming? "It's an intense level of focus and could train-wreck at any moment. It's an existential drama of a woman who can't decide whether to live or die, so she decides to bury herself in her backyard. I wear a little boy's tiny blue shirt and a wig of big straight hair and bangs."

[512 West 19th Street, 8 p.m., 255-5793.]