

TABAIMO An animation by the Japanese artist Tabaimo, 32, is always a spectacle worth seeing, what with the enormous screens, the eerie digitalization of the Ukiyo-e, or Japanese "floating world" woodblock style, and the Surrealistic erosion of innocence into violence, sex or self-abuse. In her "dolefullhouse," a hit at last summer's Venice Biennale, giant hands arranging furniture in a dollhouse start scratching at the structure to reveal bleeding human flesh.

Tabaimo's second solo show in New York centers on "public conVENience," above, a three-screen work from 2006 set in a spacious restroom reminiscent of a train station ("ven" is Japanese for public). Forgoing innocence, this piece progresses from weird to very weird, as the facilities are used in all sorts of symbolic ways. One woman dives into a toilet, another washes obsessively, a third gives birth to a baby through a nostril. Large moths fly about, their cameralike eyes snapping pictures for a voyeur lurking outside a small window. The roving viewpoints make voyeurs of the audience, reveal-



TABAIMO/JAMES COHAN GALLERY, NEW YORK, AND GALLERY KOTANAKI, TOKYO

ing a particularly female world of isolation, vulnerability and obliviousness.

Not a happy sight, you might say, but a beautiful one in which the seductiveness of the animation and the surreal plot turns are mitigated by the real-world

emotional weight.

In a second animation piece, "haunted house," the camera moves ceaselessly, scanning a cityscape and various apartment dwellers going about their lives (committing murder included). Hitchcock comes to

mind, and not only for "Rear Window." The animation ends when a bird suddenly smacks into the window we look out of. Yikes. (James Cohan Gallery, 533 West 26th Street, Chelsea, 212-714-9510, through April 12.)

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