

NEW YORK

Steve Gianakos at Fredericks & Freiser

While it certainly takes a lot to shock nowadays, you have to admire Steve Gianakos for trying. His naughty hand-painted pop art makes you feel a little guilty for enjoying them in mixed-company. Featuring pornographic scenes from a male perspective, the black-and-white acrylic on canvas paintings resemble panels from a Tijuana Bible enlarged and painted with care, but not with perfection, since brush strokes are often visible. The drawing varies from overtly cartoony to a finer line quality, with some of them a mix of the two creating a surrealistic flavor as can be seen in *It Was the First Time for Them Both* (2009), where the branch of a tree reaches out to fondle a woman in a corset.

In addition to the anonymous illustrations and coloring book-style figures, well-known cartoon characters have made appearances in Gianakos' work and this show is no exception. A salivating Sylvester the Cat salts the pudenda of a violin-playing maiden in one of the raunchiest works, *Dining Without Music Was Unforgivable* (2009). Not for the easily offended, a lengthy fork sticks out of a girl's bum in *Sometimes Her Mother Would Send Her Frozen Meatballs* (2009). The titles of the works, such as *Performing at the Regional Sausage Festival* (2009), add an extra layer of humor to the over-the-top X-rated imagery.

—Chris Bors