

# The Rumpus

*The morning is the price you pay for the night before.*



## The Pinup Promised-Land

JULIE GREICIUS BIO ↓ · January 4th, 2009 · filed under ART

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Still warm in her grave, Bettie Page's mid-century pinup appeal is unlikely to cool off anytime soon. Artist Lauren Bergman puts pinups like Bettie on a pedestal, even if that means bare-assed on a hot stove, crossing the allure of the pinup with the captivity of the housewife. Doesn't everyone live this way? The icons of pinup and housewife merge in a domestic fantasy that belongs to the bride, usually at the expense of her offspring. In *Mousetrap*, the woman's place is atop a bright appliance while her child plays on the floor, a rodent's tail dangling from its mouth. So too in *Just What You've Always Wanted*, the child is at the center of the image, surrounded by hazards (more the wild mother than wild animals) yet somehow disconnected or deliberately oblivious. On one hand, the lion-taming mother seems to protect the child. On the other, the mother herself is the hazard, her bright red buttocks pointed mockingly at the child who ignores both her and the circus antics that surround her. The clean, Norman Rockwell style is appropriately deceptive.

Bergman's pinups may be agile circus performers or even arcade sharp shooters. The jolly and ironic text in the images is always quoted from real advertisements. In her latest exhibition Calhalla: Dreams of Future Passed, Bergman makes California a backdrop for her pinups, but also a Utopian pinup itself, balancing the allure of past and future, the promised land and the improbable. -Julie Greicius

### Mousetrap

Julie Greicius is the Art Editor and a regular contributor for The Rumpus. She works as ghostwriter by day and a filter of the fabulous by night. She has an MFA in writing from Columbia University and lives with her husband and two children in Palo Alto, California.

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