

Artist celebrates 'lady parties'

MICHELLE JONES. [The Tennessean](#). Nashville, Tenn.: [Sep 18, 2009](#).

Abstract (Summary)

Alley's small- to medium-size paintings offer intimate glimpses into a world of petit fours and bags stuffed with tissue paper; cropped views show a row of torsos or crossed legs, an expectant mother's stomach and lots of stylish shoes.

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It's been two years since Elizabeth Alley last attended a baby shower, but she's spent the past nine months revisiting a lifetime of baby and bridal showers while working on her latest series of paintings and sketches. The fruits of that labor are currently on view at *Twist Art Gallery*.

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"It started as looking at pictures of . . . friends, sisters and mothers, mothers and daughters," Memphis-based Alley says of the series she refers to as "lady parties." Some of the source photos were hers, others were borrowed -- some dating from the 1960s. The resulting lush oil-on-canvas (and one or two acrylic) paintings appear both contemporary and timeless.

An installation in the gallery's back room combines sketches and text in a manner similar to a graphic book; the pages are arranged to spell out a word related to the show. Twist's Beth Gilmore carried the motif of Alley's gray paper mountings throughout show by painting a wide gray stripe around the walls.

Alley's paintings and sketches remain on view at Twist through Saturday. The gallery is located in the Arcade, Suite 73, and is open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Friday and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 1-888-535-5286 or go to www.twistartgallery.com.

--MICHELLE JONES, FOR THE TENNESSEAN