



## Claudia Hart's Digital Delights



With dreams of turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and vegetables floating in our heads, it's shocking to confront Claudia Hart's still life photos of chemically produced junk food mixed with digital simulations of apples—healthy food that goes back to the beginning of time, or at least metaphorically the Garden of Eden. The Chicago-based digital whiz references a Gertrude Stein poem in her show *When A Rose is Not a Rose* at New York's bitforms gallery and plays with the Modernist vision of the still life in clever ways in her new series of photographs.





The Real and The Fake presents Cheetos, Pringles, slices of enriched white bread, bits of chemically produced breakfast cereal, artificially made drinks, and simulated fruit juxtaposed with the digital display of an apple, which serves as a poetic reference to a Cezanne still life. What's actually real is a frighteningly fake product and what's fake is a symbol of truth (as American as apple pie) and fortitude (an apple a day keeps the doctor away.)



Not content to just create still images of the death of food via industrial production, Hart takes Steins theme of “A rose is a rose is a rose” further into the realm of memento mori with a video piece that presents a twisting female figure in a series of confining, coffin-like monitors that will kill any appetite. Pious in nature, the only way to escape this form of framed torture is to stop eating and squeeze out—but wait until after Thanksgiving!