



100% Cotton

By Bill Powers

Though Will Cotton's canvases have often been described as Candyland come to life, the artist's mythical land of ice-cream caves, gingerbread chalets, and taffy forests draw more from the Old Masters than from Milton Bradley. In a show opening at Mary Boone in September, the painting of an impossibly pale girl floating on a bed of cotton-candy clouds evokes the romance of a classic Canabel while remaining strikingly contemporary. The subjects are uniformly beautiful, and yet there's an element of decay to the surroundings – sundaes melt into syrupy streams and spun sugar wilts. "The staged scenery doesn't survive, so things deteriorate and rot," says Cotton. "The painting becomes a record of a place that was real, but has ceased to exist." It's an imagined utopia where constant indulgence is the norm and the thought of cavities is as distant as the hum of chanting Oompa Loompas.