

## JAMES COHAN GALLERY

Cohen, David, "New Art on the Walls – and the Floor & Ceiling, Too," *The New York Sun*, September 20, 2006



Sculpture, which for a while seemed like the ugly stepsister of the arts, is looking more like Cinderella this season. And the belles of the ball are women. Ursula von Rydingsvard, who often works monumentally, piling up archetypal shapes of sawn planks of wood, is the subject of both a show of new work at Galerie Lelong in Chelsea (until October 21) and a display of monumental pieces in Madison Square Park, including a piece in polyurethane resin that looks like some magical, rare crystal grotto (until December 31). Mia Westerlund Roosen, an artist who works plaster in organic, hefty, energetically awkward forms, introduces a new vocabulary of folds and drapery in her first show with Betty Cuningham (until October 14).

Two women working more in the assemblage than the modeling or carving traditions of sculpture are the subject of very strong shows right now: the influential Yale professor Jessica Stockholder, with her witty pieces made from found objects, at Mitchell-Innes & Nash (until October 4), and Judy Pfaff, a pioneer of installation, who has been let loose at Ameringer Yohe with a whole funfair of accumulations and interventions.

A younger Yale instructor, Sarah Oppenheimer, has created a stunning installation at PPOW (until October 7) that forces the viewer to crouch to enter an oddly reconfigured space. Rough-cut Sheetrock keeps company with silky smooth wood paneling that exudes space-age, streamlined elegance. Rita McBride, at Alexander and Bonin (until October 25), also trades in a funky interpretation of functionality in enigmatic steel pieces that look like 1970s fixtures in corporate architecture.

It is also a good season for British sculptors — but then, isn't it always? Von Lintel offers a collaboration between the veteran land artist Richard Long and the less well-known Roger Ackling, whose trademark idiom entails scorching stenciled motifs onto shards of found wood using sunlight (until October 7). The American-based Brit Garth Evans has a solo show of his biomorphic abstractions at Lori Bookstein, his first solo with the gallery (until October 21). And just yesterday Anish Kapoor placed a monumental reflective orb at Rockefeller Center (until October 27).

There is plenty of emphatically big painting on view in galleries this fall as well. Deitch Projects, for instance, has a three-work show of David Salle, Robert Rauschenberg, and Michael Bevilacqua at their humungous SoHo showroom: The Salle is 86 feet wide (until October 14). L&M has assembled what is possibly the first show in New York exclusively devoted to Andy Warhol's color variant reworkings of a stenciled photograph of Mao Zedong, the official representation of the dictator at Tiananmen Square. Painter Sarah Morris is the subject of a large-scale, overhead installation at Lever House, a Public Art Fund project (until December 3).

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More traditional easel paintings, nonetheless notable for their bulk, include Albert Oehlen at Luhring Augustine (until October 20) and the monumental, fleshy self-portraits of Carl Plansky at Fischbach (opens October 12). Matthew Ritchie is a painter who stretches the definition of the medium, to include work in three dimensions and linear explorations in applied vinyl. His show at Andrea Rosen is much anticipated (opens September 21).

The prevailing aesthetic in painting, however, continues to involve more intimate mark-making with personal investment in the drawing. The touchstones for such painting are Outsider Art and the cartoon. The Swede Jockum Nordstrom, at David Zwirner (until October 14), fuses fiddly, naïve figuration and washed-out landscape with an Old Master-ish sense of complex narrative. The German Norbert Schwontkowski achieves a goofy expressivity in cartoon-influenced paintings, which will be shown alongside Picasso, Guston, Forrest Bess, and Alex Katz at Mitchell-Innes & Nash (opens September 21). Tom Burckhardt at Tibor de Nagy (opens October 12) has a perennially youthful, almost adolescent quality of pictorial humor. Joe Coleman at Jack Tilton (until October 4) has a nerdish Goth quality to his medieval-altarpiece-meets-comicbook-style portraits of antiheroes living at the social margin. A recent Columbia graduate, Alison Elizabeth Taylor, in a stunning debut at James Cohan (until September 30), masterfully works ambiguous scenes of small-town adolescent angst in the antiquated medium of wood inlay.

Karen Kilimnik (303 Gallery until November 4) was a pioneer of the intentionally inept, illustrational "personalism." Another explorer in the territory of nicely painted, awkwardly drawn, jumbled figuration is Elizabeth Huey, at Feigen Contemporary (until October 21). She is also featured in "Brain Salt," a collaborative installation at the same gallery with Brooke Chroman and Bryan Mesenbourg. Barnaby Furnas's masterful watercolors at Marianne Boesky (until October 21), macabre riffs on war that look to illustration as much as to fine art, has added curiosity value for those influenced by the artist's recent, spectacular auction results.

Photography and video are not to be occluded by all this paint. Catherine Opie, best known for portraits and self-portraits that push boundaries in their sense of personal beauty and identity, has a series devoted to American cities at Gladstone (until October 14). Beat Streuli, the Amsterdam-based Swiss photographer and video-maker, generally goes for subtler explorations of the social self. He has new work at Murray Guy (until October 21). And Lucas Samaras, for whom new technology and timeless egotism are happy bedfellows, offers "IMOVIES" at PaceWildenstein, a series of portraits of studio guests watching a film of the artist undressing (until October 7).