

ters and numbers collaged onto colorful grounds; rudimentary landscapes composed of flat, colored, highly simplified elements; hard-edged silhouettes of construction sites; images that resemble modernist sculpture or architecture; and thick strokes of pure color. One thinks, briefly, of Jennifer Bartlett's monumental *Rhapsody*, which also suggests a desire to encompass entire realms of art and nature, but Schwartz's paintings are as homey and improvisational as Bartlett's of the *Rhapsody* phase are rigorous and orderly. In fact, Schwartz's works have the unfinished quality of a patchwork quilt—it's easy to imagine the artist adding to them if the fancy took her.

The primary pleasure these works afford is discovery. The longer one looks, the more one focuses on individual sections and begins to pick out subtle rhythms. For instance, circles that, in one section, have a cosmic, Adolf Gottlieb aura, metamorphose elsewhere into colorful clocks, schematic foliage or abstract dots. Stripes may be graphic abstractions, flags, smeared strokes of rough pastel or architectural elements. No global order ever asserts itself here, but many unexpected connections do.

Schwartz is an accomplished artist with a long career who has also written on art and feminist issues. As this exhibition demonstrates, she has made her way in the art world as a genuine individualist, less interested in trend-setting than in expressing her highly personal vision. The result is work that is difficult to place, easy to enjoy.

—Eleanor Heartney

Eric Bainbridge at Salvatore Ala

Issues in sculpture wax and wane. While big was often better in American sculpture of the '60s and early '70s, by the '80s sculptors were focusing once again on the object and its pedestal. Now, thanks mostly to a bunch of Europeans, large scale is again at issue for younger sculptors. But big pieces risk being unnecessary inflations of little ideas, or arrogant displays of capital, or just dumb. In his large-scale sculptures of the past three years, Eric Bainbridge has successfully avoided these hazards by staying subversively close to them.



Gustavo Ojeda: *Central Park, February, 1987*, oil on linen, 50 by 34 inches; at Beitzel.



Eric Bainbridge: *The Temptation, 1986*, mixed mediums, 76 by 57 by 169 inches; at Salvatore Ala.

This young British sculptor's working process is simple. Out of wood, wire mesh and plaster, he builds big, crude replicas of things he generally finds small—be they ordinary objects such as an olive pitter or salt and pepper shakers, or kitschy items such as a candle in the shape of a pipe smoker, or a cookie mold in the form of a fawn. Bainbridge assembles several or more of these disquietingly scaled elements into the stacked or sprawling arrangements we have become familiar with in modern abstract sculpture; he then covers the parts with various fake fur fabrics. The pieces are often very funny and may seem lighthearted, but they also prove to be clever—and rough. With these overblown consumer goods, Bainbridge confounds all manner of sculptural conventions.

In the 11-foot-tall *Handle*, he attacks frontality. A large, almost flat, crouching fawn covered in beige plush spotted with painted mauve ellipses perches atop two carafelike forms in black plush which rest on a rounded platform upholstered with fake leopard. The whole seems weird, but not necessarily outrageous. But then the back of the fawn sprouts a more than six-foot-long crank in dark purple, along with two-foot-

diameter spheres. A cylindrical hole is bored in the back of the head. We are used to frontal sculptures where the back is like the structure supporting a billboard, but not to sculptures where the back is a different, almost unrelated event. If a binding logic is to be found here, it is situated well outside the visual objects we see, which seem to have laws of their own.

More than anything else it is the fur that makes these pieces work. It gives them a visual softness and suggests a physical malleability, thus leading us away from a strict examination of the forms. Bainbridge often uses the patterns in the fur and its piecing to create illusionistic shadings that further camouflage the volumes underneath. Our attention is held on the surface, and away from the work's structure. Fake fur remains stubbornly kitschy, thus undermining the monumentality of the sculptures even while making that monumentality ever more disturbing.

Seen together, the six pieces in this recent show gave off an easy pleasure, a bit like a Disney production whose darkness lies in a carefully hidden subtext. But in a group show, Bainbridge's tough-minded assault on modern British sculpture—Moore, Hepworth, Caro—would be telling.

He takes risks that his contemporaries like Kapoor and Woodrow regrettably no longer dare. Bainbridge's willful "stupidness" really pays off.

—Anne Rochette
and Wade Saunders

Gustavo Ojeda at Beitzel

It's New York City—the metropolis of dreams and dross we know so well—that Cuban-born Gustavo Ojeda is interested in, indeed, possessed with picturing. He depicts the city with such brains and bravura that one is hard put to figure out how the artist pulls it off at age 30.

Ojeda's loose painterliness is his craft, but passion is his medium. In *Times Square, 1986*, he views Manhattan at night, in the near distance and head-on; in his hands, the city becomes visionary. A movie marquee is slashed in at bottom right in purples and yellows; a brown building rears up on the left; the purplish Times Square signboard is lit with a powder-blue "S"; and lights—substantial flecks of oil paint—beam here and there on the primally dark streets, as if we were in some subterranean cave of the urban soul. Ojeda is amazingly deft at getting Manhattan