

**THE  
LOS ANGELES  
NEW YORK  
EXCHANGE**



Errata

page [15]

The correct title for Rebecca Howland's piece as described in Roberta Smith's essay is "Strata: Coal and Oil Relief," not "Oil and Clay Relief."

page [21]

Rebecca Howland's reproduction has been printed upside down.





untitled drawing installation, 1982, charred branches, paper, litho crayon, wire mesh structure, detail 15'.

## MEGAN WILLIAMS

Born: 1956, Cleveland, Ohio  
Lives in Los Angeles

**Education:** *California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, B.F.A. 1978*  
Cleveland Institute of Art, 1973-74  
Rhode Island School of Design, summer 1973

**Selected Exhibitions:** LAICA, Los Angeles, 1983 (one-person)  
LACE, Los Angeles, 1982 (group)  
80 Langton Street, San Francisco, 1981 (one-person)  
Fischer Gallery, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1981 (group)



## Acknowledgements

The idea for this exhibition was first discussed in 1980. Linda Shearer, Executive Director of Artists Space, and Marc Pally, who was Director of LACE until February 1983, were to be co-curators, and selections would be made jointly, which would permit a fresh (out-of-town) perspective to work with a more familiar (in-town) perspective. Susan Larsen and Roberta Smith were asked to contribute essays on the Los Angeles and New York artists respectively. Both became involved in the project, their advice and opinions were continually helpful and their essays provide a distinguished and lucid interpretation of the work and its context.

We are indeed both indebted to the staffs of Artists Space and LACE who, under the most stressful of situations, never failed to provide the necessary support to keep the project, and us, afloat. The National Endowment for the Arts was instrumental in realizing the *LA-NY Exchange* by providing important grants to both organizations. Additional support from Atlantic Richfield Foundation and Warner Communications provided the funds necessary to complete the project. Thanks are also due to Fine Art Shipping, Inc., Santa Monica. Most importantly, we are deeply grateful to the artists whose work inspired this project.

Marc Pally and Linda Shearer



## *Introduction*

The long history of dialogue between the two coasts of the United States was founded on the great romance of adventure and thirst for riches that pushed early American settlers ever westward. Well over a hundred years ago the physical aspects of this quest were concluded. As the original western settlements established themselves a unique synthesis of cultures evolved. Some aspects of this culture could be described as complete imports, for instance a touring opera or theatrical group would present versions of productions conceived in Baltimore or New York, to the ambitions of painters like Alfred Bierstadt, who trained in the east yet found the majestic scale of the west the perfect subject for his temperament. The underlying structure of this emerging cultural dialogue was that history and all its concerns were defined in the east. Of course this geographic model is the very one that pertains to the original colonies; there, history (culture) was imported from the east, primarily England. Today culture communicates in a less linear path. This is basically a technological achievement in which electronic information processing provide up-to-the-minute reports on every conceivable type of news. Additionally, the advent of jet transport has heralded a new age of physical mobility.

McLuhan's global village is one extreme paradigm for the future; however, for the time being the world is still far from becoming one continuous undifferentiated blob. The *LA-NY Exchange* is an attempt to enrich the dialogue between these two prominent cultural centers by introducing to each city work by artists who have not been previously exhibited there, but who have achieved a degree of visibility in their own city.

As this project emerged it became clear that one of its unique features was the fact that both LACE and Artists Space are organizations committed to the support of serious new art and, for the vast majority, show the work of younger artists who have not developed commercial gallery affiliation or museum exposure. The artists selected for this exhibition represent a middle territory in which work is characterized by the assumption of clear direction and identifiable language but is without consistent access to national exposure that comes either with commercial success or museum support.

The initial idea for the exchange was very simple—it was to stimulate and satisfy both curiosity and communication about recent art in both cities. We believe New York and Los Angeles represent the most vital centers of cultural activity in this country and that there have been too few opportunities for one city to directly experience current art practices of the other. Certainly each center is well aware the other exists and, each has a well-documented stereotype of the other—New York is seen by Los Angeles as overly intellectual, highly conscious of its historical



context and perhaps arrogantly self-contained; Los Angeles is seen by New York as surface-oriented, conceptually weak and self-indulgent. The challenge for the *LA-NY Exchange* goes beyond exposing the simplemindedness of these generalizations. Both of us know the art activity in each city to be complex and at its best highly rewarding. Furthermore, both New York and Los Angeles have during the past few years been reinvigorated—New York has been challenged and stimulated by a wave of European art that seems to have heightened the level of practice and discourse, not only for those artists who are aligned with the Europeans but for those artists who have basic and profound differences with them. Los Angeles has witnessed a remarkable spurt of cultural growth, most clearly exemplified in the distribution system for the arts: an extraordinary number of commercial galleries, clubs, non-profit spaces and, most dramatically the Museum of Contemporary Art, have sprung up in the last four years. Communication between these two cities is nothing new, in particular Los Angeles artists are well aware of the New York scene, through art journals and trips east. Information on Los Angeles is less available and, probably, of less interest to New York artists. Outside of commercial galleries, with their specific need for current marketability and, museums, with their need for proven or established talent, there have been too few opportunities for the public to critically assess the level and extent of new art from the other coast.

Before selecting the work we discussed some of the issues that would probably arise. For the main we expected the effect of location to be variable—that is, some work would most definitely refer to its immediate environment, culturally and socially, and other work would refer to a more national or international framework. We also identified a number of prevailing concerns, i.e. graffiti, expressionism, structuralism, political and social work, media and appropriation, cultural criticism and so on. Originally we wanted to organize the exhibition around a specific idea, one which perhaps epitomized the most potent visual language and set of concerns of the day. This approach would then lead to an objective coherence to the selection process and would also provide visitors to the exhibition an explicit intellectual structure in which to perceive the work. A number of such ideas were explored, some more subtle and complex than the already familiar “movements,” others were equally general and/or vague. As we began visiting studios together in both cities it soon became apparent that the use of any such organizing principle as thematic content, style or ideology, was essentially arbitrary insofar as we do not believe any one movement at this time carries with it a passport to historical validation. Lately there appears a growing impatience with pluralist culture with its endless variety of style and experience; however, it is our conclusion that the work of many interesting and worthwhile artists is so totally eclectic and individualized as to make the search for discrete categories look like the proverbial quest for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Indeed, if anything seems to be a significant and common methodology, it is that which encourages the integra-



tion of myriad systems, be it the visual mix of fine art, craft, folk art and decoration in Lari Pittman's paintings or the use of biological and ecological research in the work of Christy Rupp.

We were also concerned that there was work that could be misinterpreted or easily dismissed in one city while it maintained its potency in another. The collaborative nature of this exchange has attempted to address this issue. Certainly familiarity with any given body of work provides the viewer a better perspective with which to judge any selection from that body. Since all the artists selected have already obtained a degree of local visibility it will be possible to see how well the work does travel. It is hard to resist finding equivalents for particular artists in both cities; there are certainly profound similarities for some artists which verify the notion of a culture not bounded by geography. On the other hand some artists appear more as singular figures, related only in oblique ways to their cohorts.

If we were not going to organize the exhibition around a specific art, were we then to use the exhibition as a potpourri or representative sample of the current scene? Again, we were able to identify what such a list might look like. An exhibition of this sort would inherently place the work of the artist into the service of our organizational scheme. However, in our studio visits we were continually reminded that work often refuses to participate neatly in any prevailing scheme. Ultimately we decided that this exhibition would not attempt to be a comprehensive representation of either city. The twelve artists were selected because of individual merit, though they have in common a dedication to extending art's arena, be it into another system of reference and presentation or into a realm of exaggerated ambiguity to name but two examples.

Marc Pally and Linda Shearer



# *Los Angeles*

by Susan C. Larsen

Twenty years have passed since the advent of the "L.A. Look" of the 1960's which put Los Angeles art on the national map. Not one but two generations of Los Angeles artists have matured since then. Here, as on the national scene, new issues have displaced older ones and have changed the entire face of our art community. Some of us who live in Los Angeles today look back on those halcyon days of the sixties as a mixed blessing. It was a proud and dynamic time, to be sure, but it left the indelible impression of a jazzy, hi-tech, "fetish-finish" aesthetic which was then and continues to be only one aspect of artistic activity in Los Angeles.

Ours is a massive, multi-cultural, bi-lingual city with strong ties to many regions of the United States and countries just beyond our borders. Times have changed and a typical Los Angeles resident, especially an artist, is more likely to live and work in a densely populated urban area than to be found in the sundrenched seaside art colonies of several decades ago. With our massive, sprawling, varied terrain embraced by mountain ranges and the Pacific Ocean, we are likely to live in closer contact with the land than many of our New York counterparts. However, our day-to-day experiences tend to be urban rather than suburban in character and many Los Angeles artists are now living downtown in an area characterized by more displacement, turmoil and human diversity than can be found in most Manhattan neighborhoods.

Although it may be pleasant to think of Los Angeles art as the product of a palm-tree-lined seaside community, that is not its reality, especially for the young artists just beginning to make a career in this city. The human geography of the American Southwest with its rapidly expanding populations, increased Latin and Asian character and complex cultural changes have created a new context for art and for the artist. Many of us sense that living in Los Angeles is living on the edge, that the human, economic and cultural issues being faced here right now are prophetic of massive problems and potentialities to be confronted in the next century. Los Angeles is unwieldy, moving as fast as quicksilver, tense, filled with promise and perhaps the most interesting and problematic city in the country right now. The current exhibition presents several aspects of our large, highly active community. It was not intended as a cross-section and it depends, as it should, upon the personal orientations of six individuals. But it should help to dispel some of the old cliches about art in Los Angeles and open the door for a serious and updated examination of recent activity here on the West Coast.

The art of Kim Hubbard is as direct and graphic as a slogan shouted in a public square or a political poster fixed to a city wall. She has traveled a great deal in Europe and Latin America and



retains a remarkable sense of distance from the American cultural mainstream. She does not present the content and day-to-day realities of American life but holds up a mirror to show us the image of America reflected in the eyes of the Third World just beyond our borders. In doing so, she does not rely upon narrative, sentiment or argument but casts the complexity of it all in invented symbols which mock the very possibility of symbolic representation of human political and emotional issues.

Her manner of presentation is at times a subtle one; the flat pattern of a Peruvian cloth is seen against a row of robot-like figures or else she presents a blending of well-known roadside symbols with invented undecipherable ones. At other times, her imagery speaks plainly but does not attempt to re-create the actual events which have aroused her passions. These mute, somewhat oblique yet clearly defined forms are not addressed to formal or stylistic issues but to the conditions of late twentieth century life in the Western Hemisphere. Her art is not conceived as an embellishment to life. Instead her stark, unadorned formal structure focuses upon the most basic graphic elements of communication. Hubbard's work issues something of a challenge to the viewer. Do our everyday systems of visual notation and communication truly serve us well? Do they contain the complexity of our thoughts and feelings? How may the artist conceive of new forms more open-ended and less coercive than those now in use? These are some of the questions being asked by Hubbard and others of her generation in Los Angeles.

In a slightly different context the work of Mitchell Syrop poses a variety of questions concerning the language of mass media, the value systems taken for granted by advertizers and the artist's own desire to unmask these and propose some tragi-comic alternatives. One option is utter frankness which Syrop achieves through parody. His well-composed, printed advertisements with their understated, impeccably correct production values, speak in the language and accent of the commercial mainstream. However, their messages strip away the calm surface of commerce and point to the structures of power and influence which affect the processes of getting and spending. There is anger and humor here as well as fascination with the mechanism of it all. The power of unrestricted candor is pitted against the devastating power of a communications industry reaching into every hour and every corner of our lives.

As an experiment, Syrop presented himself as a candidate for employment in that very industry he has examined in such a frank and unforgiving manner. His portfolio was well laid out, entirely normal in style and tone except for a few subtly deviant ads presented at the end of the interview if it got that far. In several instances he was immediately found out and ejected, his essentially subversive purpose divined within minutes even though the artist swears he offered no overt clues in conversation or attitude. In other words, the industry recognized its own and an alien was spotted like one species rejecting a member of another.

His purpose, the artist quickly points out, is not to make a



counterfeit ad which would be easy enough, but to query the language and content of the graphic world we live in, the vast majority of which is presented in the form of advertising. Syrop's discontent with it all is evident, but in speaking with him another less obvious aspect emerges, his fascination with its efficiency and power, the industry's complete and effective fulfillment of an essentially narrow but clear purpose on an hitherto unimagined scale.

Lari Pittman does not quarrel with the endless, mindless outpouring of decorative modernistic design which has adorned our local restaurants, living rooms and basements since the end of World War II. He probes it with an affectionate irony, bringing out the awkward fallacies of that brave new world promised to us by well-meaning reformers of the fifties. Pittman's work is filled with patterned papers, misplaced Chinoiserie, classical temples and evocations of the tropics, all strangely abstracted and denatured by our habit of reading them not as image but as motif. Pittman actually reverses this reading by re-introducing such elements into the context of his paintings where they live in a strange and beautiful new way as mannered actors on a pictorial stage **endowed with a new life by virtue of their context, and perhaps by a presence they have had all along.**

**Pittman's work is an assault to the senses that requires one to** step back and gain a bit of distance. In so doing, one discovers a marvelous young painter whose command of both form and content is able to sustain the frantic traffic jam of disparate imagery deliberately placed at the psychological and physical center of his otherwise elegant compositional structures. Pittman's work can be very offputting at first, a deliberate parade of a tasteless and best-forgotten decor of our recent past. It then becomes apparent that he is not trying to confront or correct us but has gathered all of this material, and perhaps the viewer as well, in a warm, capable and well-meaning embrace.

These visual mixed metaphors are so typical of the mixed-up architectural world we live in with its remnants of past civilizations, overlapping generations of structures and healthy disregard for continuity. Some of Los Angeles' older neighborhoods are a festival of reminiscence and display, oddly attractive to us now in an **era of pre-planned homogeneous, gate-guarded communities.** **Pittman's work does not depend upon his sophisticated layering** of quotation and allusion. Instead, he uses it with a deft and clear-sighted sense of its role and purpose. That is where and why it succeeds so well and why the future course of his career will be so interesting to watch.

A delicate balance is sought by Victor Henderson in his exploration of the self in the context of a pressurized environment with frequent explosions of tension and turmoil. He is an outwardly calm, reflective individual who does not deal with life at arm's length but brings it up close, at times too close for personal comfort. His recent cycle of self-portraits place the viewer in the midst of a highly charged atmosphere created by strongly outlined brightly-painted heads seen at varying angles and attitudes. Each



is an image of the artist himself and each establishes a slightly different mood, physical orientation and angle of vision.

The broad, multi-branched limb of an actual tree frames these vivid presences, establishing a sharp contrast of the steady, ample materials of nature with a more frenetic, highly colored image of man. Henderson is a marvelous draftsman and he has spent many years as a figurative artist and painter of large-scale murals. Thus, the unusual scale of his recent work comes naturally to him and has been a constant in his life as an artist and his activity in Los Angeles. What is new is Henderson's use of silhouetted imagery and his placement of painted planes in real space. What was once pictorial and illusionistic has now become virtually theatrical, abstracted and unreal but actually present, sharing one's own space and addressing its audience directly.

There is a new urgency to Henderson's work, stemming from his desire to establish an intense climate of interaction with the viewer. By themselves, these painted heads would overwhelm us with their ragged outlines and saturated color. Together they sustain a strong dissonant vibrato which speaks with one voice, that of the work of art as orchestrated by the artist.

The art of Jill Giegerich is thoughtful and yet deeply-felt, a beautiful fusion of sensitivity and intellect. One senses the discipline and editing involved in the articulation of each line, the placement of each form in space. The transmutation of an image from the two-dimensional context of a drawing to a constructed relief in space or to an actual three-dimensional object occurs with great frequency in her work. At each stage the work of art stands complete and self-sufficient. With each leap into the next level of spatial articulation the entire situation acquires a different mood and character.

It seems evident that for Giegerich the making of art is not a spontaneous outpouring rooted in process and guided by the materials themselves. Her work is stripped of the superfluous; it says only and exactly what she has chosen to say with maximum emphasis and eloquence. Formally and conceptually her art has an affinity with that of the Russian Constructivists which was also based upon reciprocal relationships between two and three-dimensional structures. Giegerich also conceives of the artist as a worker who combines mental and physical labor to create an object which fulfills itself in both realms.

In her work there is no confusion about the role or purposes of art. Art is not a means to an end but is the goal itself, even while the object functions as a carrier of social and aesthetic values. Although her career is just beginning, she is one of the most gifted and mature of our younger artists, one whose vision reaches beyond regional confines and does so with poise and dignity.

The art of Megan Williams, so ethereal and open in its form, is as fluid and continuous as the action of the forces of nature. She does not seek to define and delimit but to fill an environment with meaningful incident. To do this she frequently adapts natural



materials, a twig that becomes a painted flying human figure or retains its identity and casts powerful angular shadows in space. At other times she uses sound. In this exhibition she focuses upon the sounds of rain falling on tin cans in a California winter storm. Her work is an orchestrated response to nature. She listens, feels, then acts parallel to and in harmony with natural events, her response is both beautiful and original. Her work does not shout, it suggests, turns a corner gently and subtly, speaks in low tones so as to leave room for the viewer to listen and react, thus perpetuating a natural cycle.

At the same time, Williams seeks a dramatic encounter with her audience. The abundance of her form often appears as a thicket or a dense underbrush, physically involving and overwhelming yet composed of fragile, ephemeral elements. She lives in a rural area outside Los Angeles which is alternately lush and green from the winter rains, then burned and barren from the intense dry heat of summer. These transformations are as total and devastating in their own way as are the cycle of seasons in the Eastern United States. Williams' dramatic sensibility is closely attuned to the seasonal moods of her environment. She accepts its harsh realities and celebrates its moments of ecstatic beauty. Over the past few years her art has grown strong in its gentleness.

If our younger artists have any special sense of mission it is to allow the natural diversity of this place to be expressed in all of its forms and with all of its many colors and accents. We seem to be living in a time when that is vitally important and entirely possible. Then, perhaps the rest of the country will be able to see us as we really are.

S.C.L. 3-31-83



## *Worldly Goods:*

### *The New York Side of the LA-NY Exchange*

by Roberta Smith

The current "context" of New York art, the New York art world, has lately been so thoroughly evoked in the professional and popular press that it hardly needs to be talked about here; it is so expanded, expansive, and convoluted that it can hardly be accurately described anywhere. It has to be experienced in all its heady, depressing density. Suffice it to say that the New York art context of the '80s combines the diversity of the '70s with the bull market and critical competitiveness of the '60s. Today, New York is part of an art community more thoroughly national and international, particularly in the stylistic sense, than at any time since World War II, but it also seems as dominant as ever, particularly in the economic sense. Pluralism is far from dead, but it is no longer a pluralism of peaceful co-existence; there is more to fight about and for: the battle lines are drawn and the stakes, both critical and financial, are high.

The new, singularly '80s ingredients are the basic conservatism of the times—something which many argue is reflected in the return to the art object; the high cost of living and making art (especially in New York City whose mayor is particularly receptive to the desires of big real estate developers); and the pervasive sense of being at the end of something both in art and as a nation.

New York as a city and an art center seems impossibly corrupt, decadent, unhealthy and yet extremely exciting, morbidly stimulating; it is a polluted pressure cooker that most of us intermittently hate, but few would choose to leave. Consistent with the complex "impacting" of the Baby Boom generation on all areas of society, there is here a continual sense of escalation; growing numbers of artists, dealers and collectors, rising rents and real estate taxes, rising art prices and increasingly frequent sell-out shows, bi-gallery shows, bi-annual shows.

Given all these new pressures, it is hardly surprising that today's artists are privileged or burdened with an inescapable sense of how things work. Sometimes this knowledge, this '80s worldliness and sophistication, is used to manipulate astounding art world success; but it is always the present, underlying quality which connects all kinds of art activity. We must show what we know—as some rapper may already have said—whether the art in question stresses political sloganeering and fingerpointing, the recycling of photographic detritus, or the most consummate and complex of painhandling, or even (and it's not impossible) all three.

Within the history of recent art proper, the development of this new art-worldliness must be credited to the devastating yet stimulating crisis of Conceptualism, the watershed art movement which



nearly put art out of business, which forced artists to reassess their relationship to the art object, and which provided the means for rejuvenation and change, through a reassertion of subject matter. Conceptualism was the straw that broke the reductivist camel's back and yet—despite its own frequent frailty—was also the bridge to a new attitude, one which looked outward at the world, which moved toward complexity, and placed legibility, meaning and the issue of meaning on equal footing with form.

The six artists in this show, if by nothing else, are united by being Post-Conceptual; they share some debt to the Conceptual/Process which dominated both the New York, Californian, and European avant-gardes during the late '60s and early '70s. They were all born in the late '40s or '50s and have all emerged in, or since, the late '70s. None of their work is "abstract" in the old sense, but even old (i.e. pre-1970) abstraction no longer seems purely abstract in that old, pure sense.

One indication of their worldliness completely outside but not unrelated to the nature of their art, is the way they have each taken things into their own hands. Rebecca Howland and Christy Rupp both emerged through their involvement with Collaborative Projects, or COLAB, the artists cooperative best known for the legendary Times Square Show and for its emphasis on inexpensive, politically-conscious work. Howland also helped found ABC No Rio, an alternative space on the Lower East Side; and Rupp is the prime mover behind City Wildlife Projects, thusfar responsible for two exhibitions of art and projects about animals by artists, amateurs and school children. To the other extreme, Jeff Koons, whose art is at least in small part about the euphoria of consumerism, supports himself working as a broker on Wall Street, in the New York Commodities Exchange. Reese Williams runs Tanam Press which publishes critical texts and artists books, including his own. Charles Clough co-founded (with Robert Longo) Hallwalls in 1975, an ongoing alternative space in Buffalo which supports new work by both local and national artists. Nachume Miller has, since 1974, annually published modest but informative black and white catalogues, each presenting his newest series of work—a procedure which neatly circumvents the art gallery/art magazine system.

Howland, Rupp, and Williams all place high priority on art's social responsibilities, its obligation to deal with contemporary problems and issues beyond itself, but here the similarity ends.

Both Howland and Rupp, who are well-informed in scientific matters and frequent New York's Museum of Natural History for source material, focus on nature, its wonders and its ruination. Their painted objects and reliefs—funkily handmade as if to assert that individual action is still possible—employ accessible modes of depiction to get their messages across.

Howland's expressions can be either positive or negative, micro- or macrocosmic. One of her works is a pile of beautiful peach halves made of cast and painted plaster; another is a pile of gaudily colored, cancerous *Love Canal Potatoes*; against these handheld items is the panoramic sweep of her fountain *Brain-*



wash, a Red-Groomsian jumble of painted cement forms as grimly appealing as a political cartoon in 3D. The "Oil & Clay Relief," included here, is but one element of *Brainwash*, which also includes a strip-mined mountain (a Howland staple motif reminiscent of images from Robert Smithson's drawings), machine guns, bombs, frogs, skyscrapers, oil storage tanks topped with bright almost decorative flames, and—in the midst of all this—a large brain continually doused in running water.

Rupp, whose inclination toward sculpture parallels a longtime interest in animal behavior, concentrates on the fate of various fauna, rather than plants or minerals. In contrast to Howland's cartoonish distortions, she aims for a nearly scientific verite. Some of the problems her art has tackled are species endangerment; America's romantic and often profitable anthropomorphizing of animals into "good" and "evil" categories; and the exploitation of livestock and farmers by big business. Although she once had a sculpture, *Commodity Cows*, censored by the New York Commodities Exchange (in whose lobby she had arranged to exhibit it), I often find Rupp's realism a bit too conventional, even sweet, to fully communicate her complex concerns. The painted cardboard reliefs on exhibition here narrate in four vignettes, the effect of acid rain on the life cycle of the brook trout, but the fish look a little as if they just jumped out of a Neil Welliver mountain stream. Once you look more closely, and read the accompanying caption, the deadliness of her subject comes clear.

In conversation, Reese Williams stresses the necessity of embracing the atomic world. A former architecture student who has never made traditional art objects, he is more a presenter of information, a montagist of images, texts, and facts from countless sources, which he hopes to build into a "network of references," an "associative compound," which will foment a deeper understanding of the times we live in.

In previous installations, Williams has chronicled the assassination of world leaders or contrasted the progression of Paul Newman's acting roles with the discovery of various atomic elements. In his book, *Figure Eight*, repeating text fragments gradually coalesce into a relatively single, looping narrative, a social satire at once apocalyptic, sci-fi and yet strangely mystical. Interrupting these texts are often riveting appropriated images, several of which Williams has used throughout his work: the famous steps scene from Eisenstein's *October*, a World War II newsphoto of just-liberated POWs surging toward the camera, a starkly geometric configuration of a giant electrical transformer toppled across a row of identical structures.

Williams thinks of art-making and publishing as indistinguishable, cross-pollinating activities, and claims he is not that interested in visual results. On the basis of *Figure Eight*, I think of him more as a talented writer and picture editor. The piece he plans to include in the LACE exhibition will consist of large panels layered with images, symbols, texts, and words, many of them from his second book, *A Pair of Eyes* (forthcoming); it should give a clearer indication of his sensibility as a visual artist.



Relative to the first three artists, Charles Clough, Nachume Miller, and Jeff Koons, in extremely different ways, give overriding precedence to esthetic issues, although their work is hardly hermetic or inaccessible. Miller and Clough are both painters who place great emphasis on process, on building their images from the ground up, and on the use, both admiring and ironic, of older art.

Charles Clough's endeavor might be characterized as the problem of making paintings in the "age of mechanical reproduction," in other words, of reconciling painting to the existence of photography. Like Reese Williams, Clough uses the photograph, but only as a point of departure; photography enables him to, quite literally, build on the "foundation" of older art, to have his cake and obliterate it too. Clough paints over postcards and other art reproductions, photographing and blowing up the results and then painting on them again. His paintings are essentially abstract, gestural, and brightly colored—sparkling whites, blues, pinks, and golds abound. Much of the sparkle comes from the fact that their surfaces, despite the animated brushwork, have the crispness of a four-color reproduction. These cool surfaces foil the hot, expressionist brushwork, just as the abstractness is foiled by an occasional foot, head, or eye peeking through—remnants of, clues to some underlying Delacroix or Rubens. Likewise, the weird impression that one is actually looking at a blown-up "detail" of an Old Master painting is overturned when you see that the details of Clough's fake-real paintings actually *are* details of Old Master paintings. Clough's work bespeaks an admiration of Rubens, DeKooning, Delacroix—all artists who worked "direct;" but, full of endless ironies and entendres, both visual and conceptual, it is anything but direct. In its disjunctive layering of time, scale, and technique, it continually reiterates how photography has altered the way we see and how painting, perversely adjustable, perseveres.

While Clough literalizes the photograph by dematerializing painting, Nachume Miller, who came to painting via installation work, takes a more staunchly literalist approach. He works in a muscular, often monumentally-scaled style which seems to cross Michelangelo with Leger and Bacon, and he paints on everything from flimsy gingham and checks, to canvas, to plywood and patterned plaster relief. His imagery runs and reruns the gamut, usually juxtaposing two or more pictorial conventions: Modernist abstraction, Gris-like still-life, Leger-like portraiture, or Michelangelesque figuration. In contrast to Clough, Miller's materials often have a worn, distressed look, as if he wants to downplay painting's beauty and play up its existence as a common object in a not too cheerful world. While Clough's paintings are full of white and light, Miller's, regardless of the image, are consistently dark, his colors almost always undercut by black. In this and many other ways, he continually defines an ambiguous position to painting's present and its past, grand tradition.

The largest work here is a painting on three plywood panels titled *Three Figures*. In each panel, a monumental figure sits in a blackened half-light of monochrome (red, blue or yellow), in a very





*Venous Plexus 2*, 1983, enamel, collage on masonite,  
17½" x 31½", (photo credit: Pelka/Noble)

## CHARLES CLOUGH

Born: 1951, Buffalo, New York  
Lives in New York

Education: Ontario College of Art, Toronto, 1971-72  
Pratt Institute, New York, 1969-70

Selected Exhibitions: Albright-Knox Art Gallery and The Burchfield Center,  
Buffalo, 1983 (joint one-person)  
Pam Adler Gallery, New York, 1983, 1982, 1980  
(one-person)  
Sidney Janis Gallery, New York 1980 (group)  
CEPA Gallery, Buffalo, New York, 1979 (one-person)  
Artists Space, New York, 1978 (group)  
Hallwalls, Buffalo, New York, 1976 (group)  
Artists Space, New York, 1976 (group)

Work courtesy of Pam Adler Gallery, New York





untitled, 1983, plywood, paint, modeling paste, collage, charcoal, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x26 $\frac{1}{2}$ "x6 $\frac{7}{8}$ ".

## JILL GIEGERICH

Born: 1952, New York, New York  
Lives in Los Angeles

Education: California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, B.F.A. 1975,  
M.F.A. 1977  
Mount Angel College, Mount Angel, Oregon 1971-72  
San Francisco City College, 1970-71

Selected Exhibitions: Riko Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles, 1981 (one-person)  
LAICA, Los Angeles, 1981 (group)  
University of California Art Museum, Santa Barbara, 1981 (group)  
LAICA, Los Angeles, 1980 (one-person)  
P.S.1, Long Island City, New York, 1979 (group)  
Hallwalls, Buffalo, New York, 1978 (group)

Work courtesy of Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles





*With & Without*, 1981-83, paper mache, tree, acrylic, foam board, fiberglass, rope, 126"x 28'.

## VICTOR HENDERSON

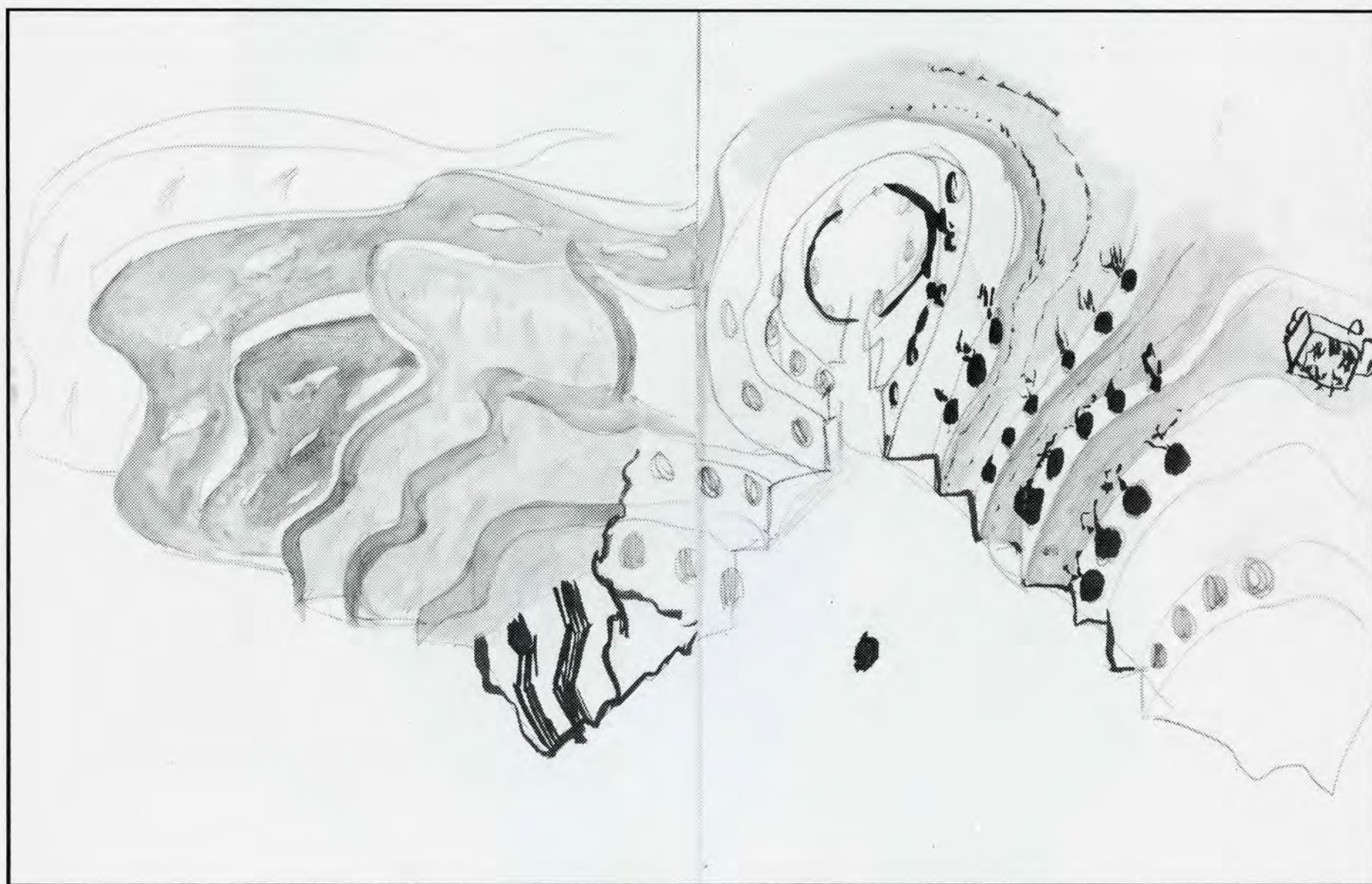
Born: 1939, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio  
Lives in Los Angeles

Education: San Francisco State College, B.A. 1961-63  
Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, 1959-60  
Pasadena City College, 1959

Selected Exhibitions: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA, 1983  
(one-person)  
San Diego State College Gallery, CA, 1982 (group)  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA, 1982 (group)  
Ulrike Kantor Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, 1981  
(one-person)  
Franklin Furnace, New York, 1981 (group)  
Newport Harbor Museum, CA, 1980 (group)  
Newport Harbor Museum, CA, 1978 (one-person performance)  
Australian National Gallery, 1977 (travelling group)  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1976 (group)  
Betty Gold Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, 1974  
(one-person)  
Paris Biennial, 1973 (group)  
Los Angeles Fine Arts Squad, 1969-73  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA, 1967 (group)

Work courtesy of Ulrike Kantor Gallery, Los Angeles, CA





*Strip Mining For Coal, And Terraced Garden, 1981,*  
gouache and pencil on bristol board, 8½"x 10".

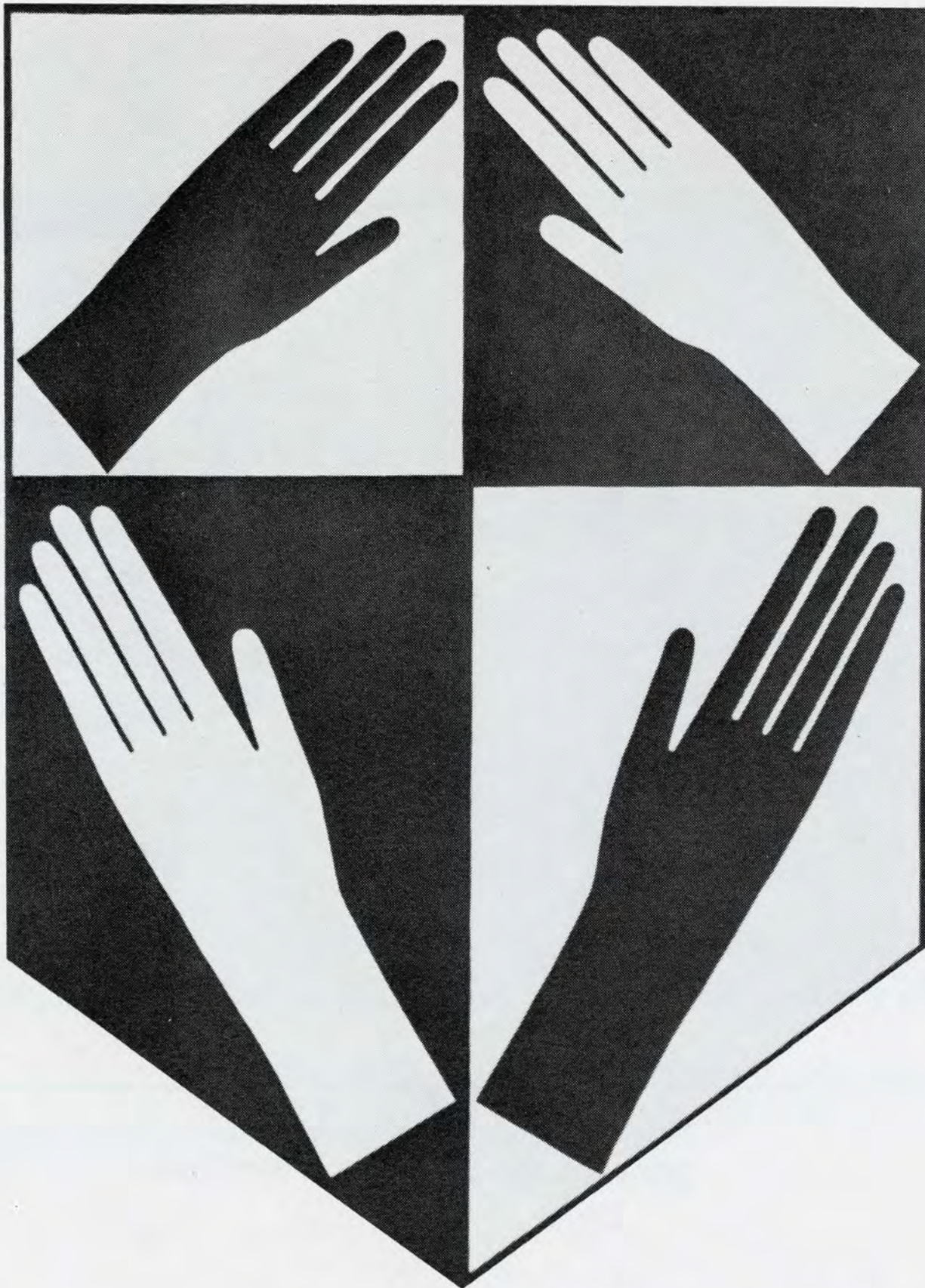
## REBECCA HOWLAND

Born: 1951, Niagara Falls, New York  
Lives in New York

Education: Whitney Museum, Independent Study Program, 1974  
Fine Arts Work Center, Provincetown, MA, 1974  
Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, B.F.A. 1973  
Independent study in Japan, 1972

Selected Exhibitions: The Williamsburg Bridge Show, New York, 1983  
(group)  
*COLAB at the Ritz*, sponsored by the W.P.A.,  
Washington, D.C., 1983 (group)  
ABC No Rio, New York, 1982 (one-person)  
Grace Borgenicht Gallery, New York, 1982 (group)  
Artists Space, New York, 1981 (group)  
ABC No Rio, New York, 1981 (group)  
*Real Estate Show*, New York, 1980 (group)  
*Times Square Show*, New York, 1980 (group)  
A More Store, New York, 1980 (group)  
*Dog Show*, 591 Broadway, New York, 1978 (group)





untitled (shield), 1982, acrylic on canvas,  
24"x 18".

## KIM HUBBARD

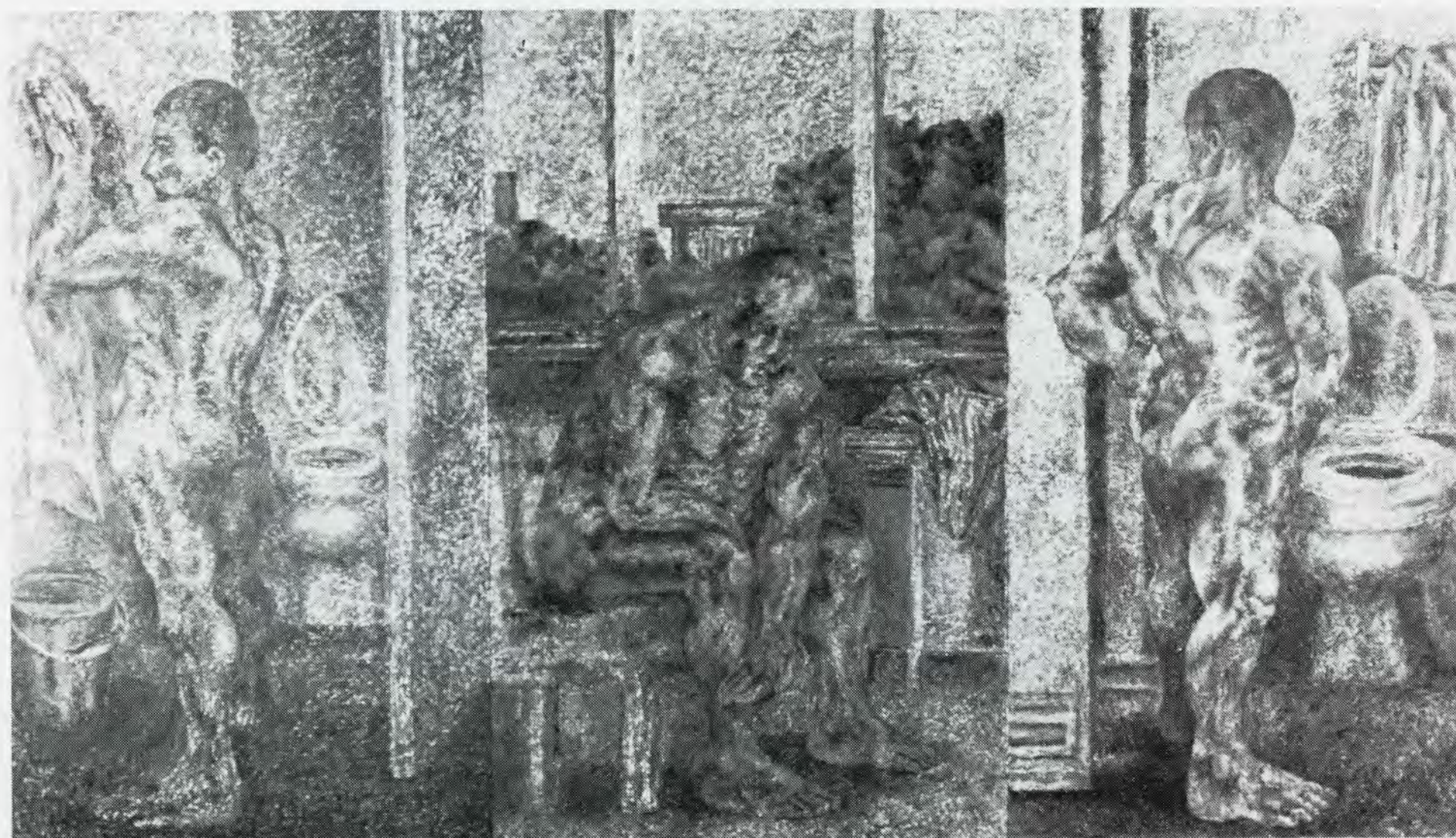
Born: 1952, Santa Monica, California  
Lives in Los Angeles

Education: University of California, Irvine, B.A., M.A., 1974

Selected Exhibitions: Security Pacific National Bank, Los Angeles, 1983  
(group)  
Jancar/Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, Los Angeles, 1981,  
1982 (one-person)  
616 S. Broadway, sponsored by LACE, 1980 (group)

Work courtesy of Kuhlenschmidt Gallery, Los Angeles





*Three Studies For Male Skin*, 1981, encaustic & oil on plywood, 7'x 12'.

## NACHUME MILLER

Born: 1949, Frankfurt, Germany  
Lives in New York

Education: School of Visual Arts, New York, B.F.A. 1975

Selected Exhibitions: P.S.1, Long Island City, New York, 1982 (group)  
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas, 1982 (group)  
Susan Caldwell Gallery, New York, 1982 (group)  
A & M Artworks, New York, 1981, (one-person)  
22 Wooster Gallery, New York, 1979 (group)  
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1978 (group)





*Denatured*, 1983, oil & acrylic on canvas with gold leaf & collage, 76"x 152". (photo credit: Douglas M. Parker)

## LARI PITTMAN

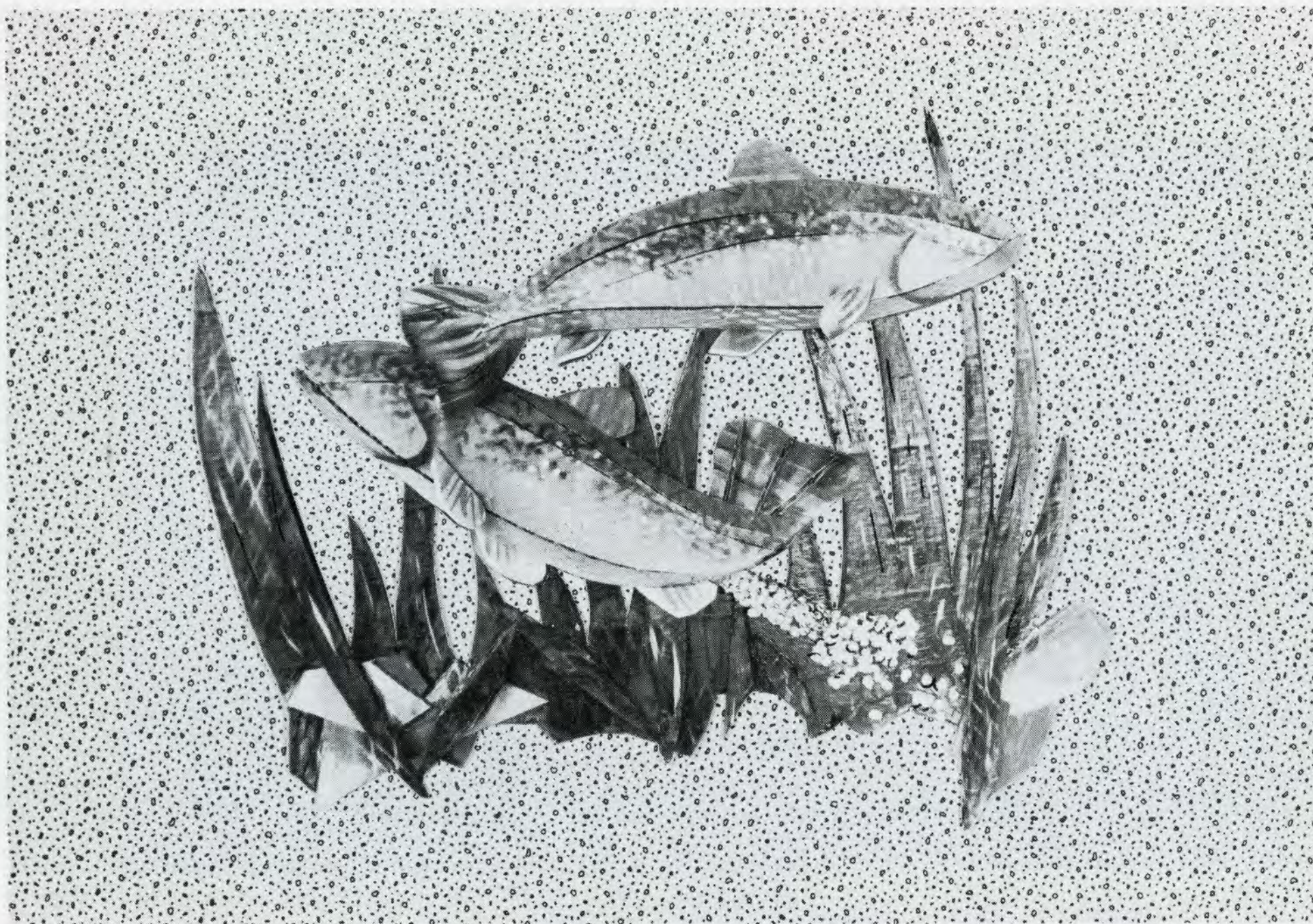
Born: 1952, Los Angeles  
Lives in Los Angeles

Education: California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, B.F.A. 1974,  
M.F.A. 1976  
University of California, Los Angeles, 1970-73

Selected Exhibitions: Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles, 1983  
(one-person)  
Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1982-83 (one-person)  
LACE, Los Angeles, 1982 (one-person)  
Santa Ana College Art Gallery, CA, 1980 (group)  
LAICA, Los Angeles, 1977 (group)

Work courtesy of Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles





*Acid Rain Series*, 1982, 2 cardboard Brook Trout spawning in degraded habitat, overgrown with oxygen-grabbing algae; cardboard & auto paint, life size.

## CHRISTY RUPP

Born: 1949, Rochester, New York  
Lives in New York

Education: Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, M.F.A. 1977  
Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, M.A.T. 1974  
Colgate University, Hamilton, NY, B.A. 1973

Selected Exhibitions: The Williamsburg Bridge Show, New York, 1983 (group)  
*COLAB at the Ritz Hotel*, sponsored by W.P.A., Washington, D.C., 1983 (group)  
Grace Borgenicht, New York, 1982 (group)  
New York City Wildlife Museum, New York, 1982 (group)  
The New Museum, New York, 1981 (group)  
ABC No Rio, New York, 1980 (group)  
*Times Square Show*, New York, 1980 (group)  
*Real Estate Show*, New York, 1980 (group)  
Fashion Moda, New York, 1979 (group)  
*The Rat Patrol*, New York, 1979 (one-person outdoor installation)  
*Dog Show*, 591 Broadway, 1978 (group)  
Artists Space, New York, 1978 (one-person)



**ALL MEN  
ARE  
CREATED  
EQUAL...**



**...but only machines have guarantees.**

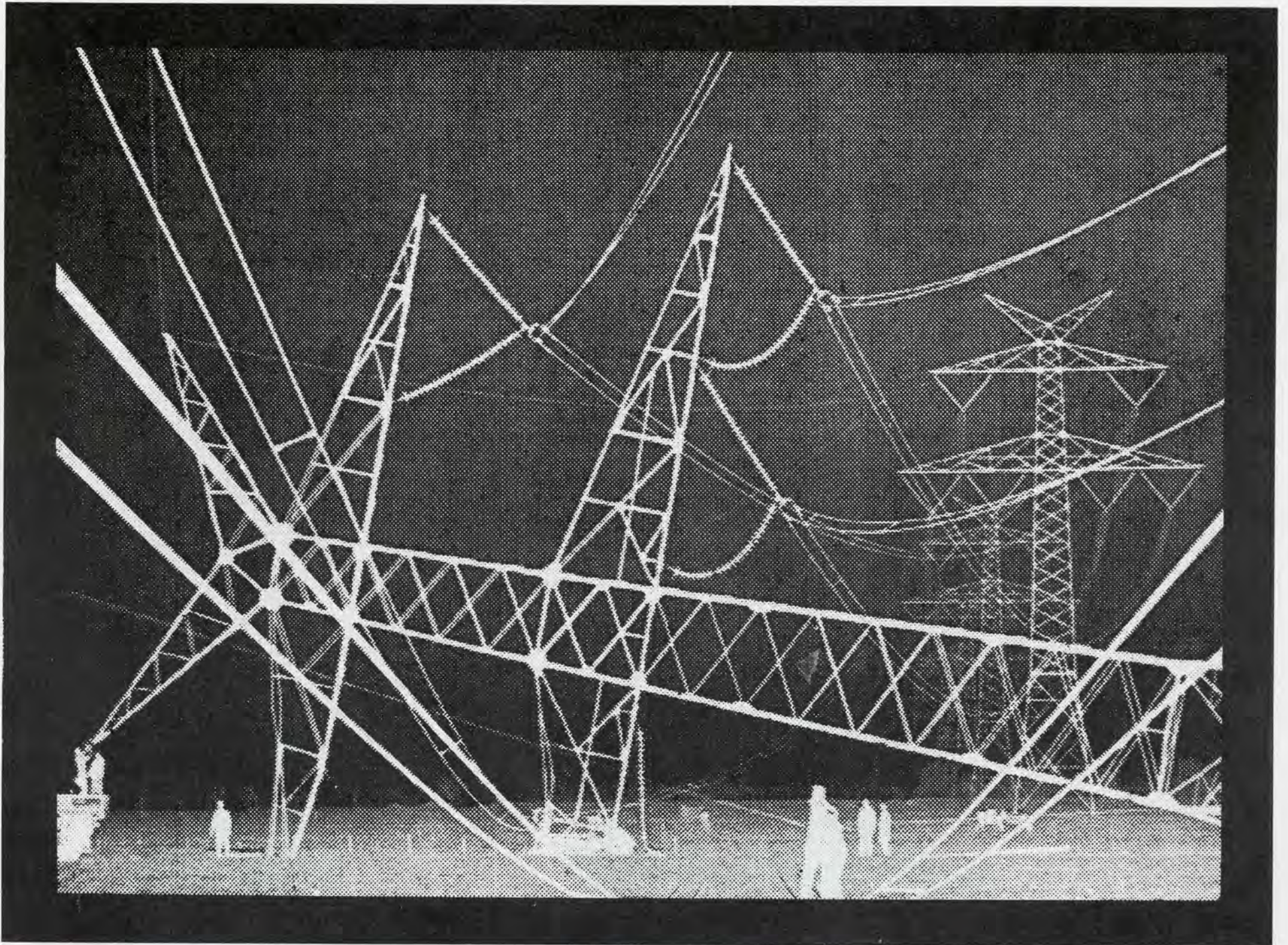
*Work Environment Safety Poster, 1982, photo collage, 30"x40".*

## **MITCHELL SYROP**

Born: 1953, Yonkers, New York  
Lives in Los Angeles

Education:	California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, M.F.A. 1978 Pratt Institute, New York, B.F.A. 1975
Selected Exhibitions and Video Screenings:	A.R.C. Gallery, Toronto, 1982 (screening) University of California, Los Angeles, 1981 (screening) LACE, 1980 (screening and exhibition) Long Beach Museum of Art, 1980 (traveling group video exhibition) Nexus Gallery, Los Angeles, 1979 (group exhibition of film installations)





*A Pair Of Eyes* (detail), 1983, photo mural with gouache, 7 40"x 60" panels.

## REESE WILLIAMS

Born: 1949, Los Angeles  
Lives in New York

Selected Exhibitions:	Alternative Museum, New York, 1982 (group) White Columns, New York, 1981 (one-person) Museum for Kulture, Berlin, 1981 (one-person) Artists Space, New York, 1980 (one-person)
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