

Weekend

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Art:

By MICHAEL BRENSON

Also of interest this week:

"U.S. Projects" (Artists Space, 223 West Broadway): For this show, five artists from different areas of the country were asked to create installations. Jerry Beck, Anita David, Audrey Glassman, Sherry Markovitz and Patricia Thornley were selected by art professionals in Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, Seattle and Atlanta respectively. Together, they used every bit of the available exhibition space, including the basement, which Beck transformed into a rambling, rambunctious and didactic apartment.

The works share a concern with ritual and time. In Markovitz's "From Dust to Dust and In Between," four papier mâché trophy heads of deer and goats engage each other in what seems like an urgent, yet doomed dialogue between a father, mother, son and daughter. In Glassman's Cibachrome photographs, all but one taken in Mexico, we are brought close to and yet kept at a distance from people and events, just as people within the photographs tend to be physically close and yet removed from one another.

Anita David's installation, "Talking to a Man," presents different perspectives on Egypt. Along with a slide projection and the artist's narration, there are three pyramidal constructions on the walls. One consists of snapshots taken by the artist during a trip to Egypt; another juxtaposes Egyptian postcards of modern Egypt with postcards of ancient Egypt. The third is composed of film stills showing us the Hollywood Egypt. One of the questions raised by the work is — where is the real Egypt, not only for us, but for the Egyptians themselves?

The most haunting installation is by Patricia Thornley. A photograph of a young woman is projected through an archway built of thin strips of wood that also suggest people at prayer or matadors at the moment of truth. While we look, we listen to a chant, which is, in fact, a recording of the artist reciting into a fan the words "all other ground is sinking sand." The work is suspended between sexuality and religion, stillness and movement, time captured and time lost. (Through June 29.)