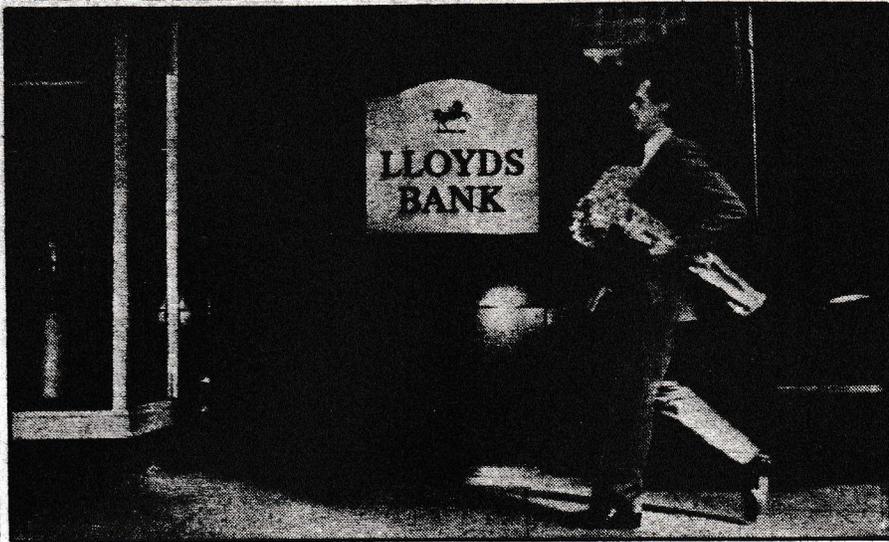


L.A. WEEKLY April 30-May 6, 1982

Pick Of The Week



Michael Levine

A multi-dimensional communication is the characteristic common to Gary Lloyd's paintings and sculptures. The dense maze of subjective ideas thrives in equal balance with almost baroque technique. Three horizontal paintings of exaggerated lengths meticulously detail such improbable scenes as a bloody red axe of prime beef hurtling through the starry universe as a space shuttle. Thus an axe, man's primitive tool of both construction and destruction, is used paradoxically as a literal vehicle of high technology. Composed of flesh and blood, the axe is metaphorically human, or organic, the opposite of the technology it represents. Lloyd's sculpture is also quite unusual. If man's inventions are made of meat, then his anatomical elements could be composed of coins. Skulls, spinal cords, limbs, and hearts are built, true to human scale, in the currency of three countries: Japan, Mexico, and the United States. In this way, the human being is defined, literally, as a product of his economy. The body parts, which are also art objects, are physical manifestations of consumer culture. The sculptures themselves bear the crude, bizarre quality of archaeological artifacts, remnants of the society of mammon. All of these concepts are balanced by the sensuous use of eccentric materials. A skull with a nickel-plated mandible and a copper-covered cranium presents a tactile as well as intellectual appeal. It is an essential formal elegance that offsets the elaborate philosophy. The only mitigating factor in the exhibition lies in the sparse, static installation. One is forced to look beyond the whole to see the beauty of the individual parts. On view at the Ulrike Kantor Gallery, 800 N. La Cienega Blvd.; thru May 15.

—Hunter Drohojowska

Ron Davis departs from his characteristic polygonal shapes and geometric dissections of space to pursue a splashier approach. His use of surface and resonant color carries over into the new work. Large canvases are spattered with rich, variegated hues that create currents of space, in which float simple geometric solids, sharing the texture of the surface and thus sitting *in* it rather than on it. The works have galactic titles, which accurately assess the feeling of the space depicted.

Who's afraid of abstract expressionism? Not Davis. His paint spatters pull away from the edge of the canvas in the residual Cubist centering that was characteristic of Pollock et al. (In other works, he plays color against the frame as Olitski did.) Davis also plays with the abstract expressionist concept of figure and ground, framing blank space as Pollock did in his *Cut-Out*.

Who's afraid of Pop? Davis recovers ground laid by Rauschenberg, collaging cans and blocks to his paintings and coating them and the canvas with paint. A series of "drawings," small collages on paper, revive Pop iconography, incorporating strawberry baskets, lids, "spilled" paint and what appear to be fake bits of chocolate.

What begins as a freer technique, and a gorgeous one at that, ends in a virtuosic retelling of recently past art that borders on parody. This show is (at the very least) a lot of fun. At Asher/Faure Gallery, 612 N. Almont Dr., thru May 15.

—Kathi Norklun