L.A. **WEEKLY** February 26-March 4, 1982

Pick Of The Week

In the past, ***Joe Fay***'s characteristic technique of biomorphic abstraction was used to camouflage referential imagery. In his most recent exhibition, however, these iconic elements have become the very subject of the compositions. Voluptuous mounds of polyurethane foam with the spiny patterns of agave leaves provide a herbaceous framing device to the action between the gatherings of dancers or selected, symbolic animals such as rabbits or crows. The saturated, almost day-glo color is staggering to the point of being almost hallucinogenic. While the figures are quite discernible, the edges tend to shimmer, creating the effect of a mirage. You don't quite trust what your senses initially observe. The happy-go-lucky amalgamations of bright color and carefree forms demand closer examination that reveals a sinister bite, elevating the paintings beyond the level of being mere baubles. This is most evident in the wall installation of three-dimensional reliefs. A DC-10 crashes into L.A. City Hall; chunky puerile figures shoot at each other with guns; a seemingly harmless flower, such as the calla lily shown above, also reads as a heart torn by a tongue of flame. Fay's exhibition is a deceptively seductive presentation of multiple visual realities. On view at Roy Boyd Gallery, 170 S. La Brea, though March 3.

—Hunter Drohojowska