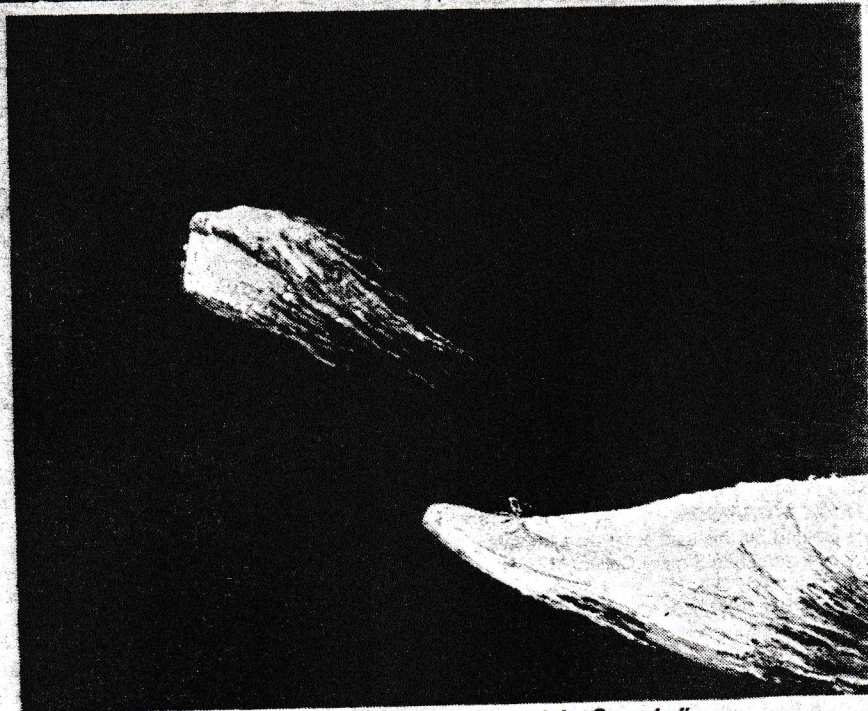


Pick Of The Week

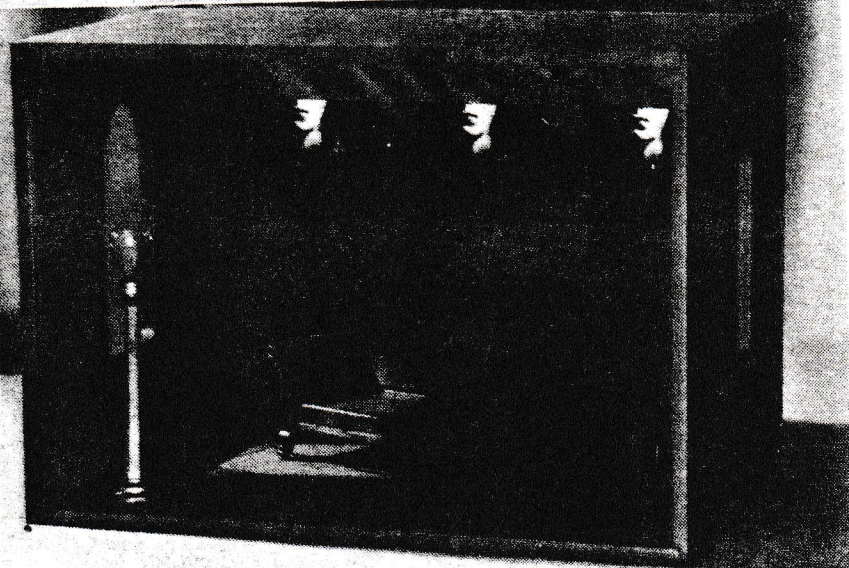


Margaret Nielson's painting "Nobody's Cupcake"

Deliciously wicked. Those are the words that spring to mind when I think of the current exhibition of works by **Margaret Nielsen** and **Natasha Nicholson**. Nielsen's paintings of everyday objects, a hat, a shoe, a light bulb, a revolver, a hammer, pack an inexplicable symbolism, inimical and undefined threats, rendered in the sweetest pastels. The objects are always hurtling through space and time, isolated and independent of any particular environment other than their titles. *Nobody's Cupcake* (above) shows a darling slipper kicking a cupcake into the ozone. Why? Only Nielsen and our own subconscious know the answers to the many questions posed by these paintings. They strike an inner chord, a resonance so personal, that they evade their own implicit quality as narratives.

The miniature environments of Natasha Nicholson also imply and then deny the narrative. Lean charcoal-gray shadow boxes are decorated in surrealist contradiction. Inviting, homey furnishings are stolidly composed within scenes of implied violence. In one bedroom, an old-fashioned bed frame is broken, a straight-backed chair lies on its back, waiting for help, and all around lie the remnants of a shattered pillar of glass. Their doll-house-approachable scale is immediately at odds with the recurring themes of destruction. The only piece that could not be considered a "box" is an open-roofed "stable." Yet the horse, a common symbol of female independence, is bound and blinded by bits of horsehair and barbed wire. These may be the shattered glass menageries of private ideology, but they speak to all viewers. At Asher/Faure.

—Hunter Drohojowska



Natasha Nicholson's assemblages at Asher Faure Gallery