

June 19 - 25

## Pick Of The Week



**M**ike Roddy's self-portraits of the "Americana" series are landscapes of his progressive psychological states during the past year. They are all drawn in graphite and charcoal from the same slide, and at first glance, one looks pretty much like another: an unshaven Roddy, wearing a hat, a cigarette drooping from his lips. The restricted subject matter, however, permits the translation of the difficult and emotional subconscious information. The drawings unfold sequentially to reveal the changes in Roddy's thinking after moving to New York from Georgia, from secure rural to hardened urban environment. The first drawing is a face of loose cross-hatchings, a cameo pose with a hilly landscape in the background (see photo), and it was drawn soon after his arrival in the city. The last image in the series reflects the year of urban adjustments. Carefully rendered in charcoal, the head is disembodied, floating free of shoulders or neck, and radiating with the nuclear energy necessary to city survival. As the drawings progress in time, they inherit their own history. The marks and shadings change, the figure may wear a jacket or a muffler, the face may be aged, wrinkled, pock-marked. Roddy did them as an exercise in self-exploration, so they have not been edited. The smudged areas where the artist's hand dragged graphite across the paper are still there, not cleaned up in any way to make nice or tidy pictures. Yet they are simple images. So simple, they become emblematic and metaphorical. Ultimately, they go beyond self-expression and read as documents of societal attitudes. The alienation and disorientation that they present are not exclusive to Roddy, but filter through the atmosphere of the times. In this way, the impact of these personal self-portraits become universal.

Also on view are proposals for environmental works by **Anna Bresnick**, **Andrew Chambers**, **John Peterson** and **Anthony Stephenson**. In the Middle Gallery are the sculptures of **Joe Grant**, which incorporate the architectural elements of doors, stairs and windows. At LACE through July 3.

—Hunter Drohojowska