

AROUND THE GALLERIES

By LEAH OLLMAN
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Tastes of a visual smorgasbord

"Mind's Eye" at Solway Jones is another of those hit-and-miss summer group shows, a visual cocktail party of casual introductions, pleasantries and, if you're lucky, an encounter or two that outlasts the hors d'oeuvres.

Patricia Smith's watercolor and ink drawings are the life of this party — devious, attractive and noncommittal. In the guise of maps and promotional materials, they articulate slightly unsettling social phenomena and psychological patterns. The isolated oval plot diagramed in "Center for Loss Prevention," for instance, suggests both the individual mind and the broader culture. Its compartmentalized sections — labeled "safekeeping," "hoarding," "damaged goods," "grief" and so on — add up to a

strategy of coping, employed not just on a personal scale but institutionally and even politically. The seductive clarity of Smith's drawing clashes brilliantly with her tone of quiet subversion.

Among the other L.A. and New York artists whose work was assembled by artist and curator Mery Lynn McCorkle are Andre Yi, who combines flat, stylized imagery with more dimensional renderings to interesting effect; Shari Mendelson, who contributes an unremarkable painted brass sculpture; and Alexandra Grant, whose method of visualizing text through drawing and sculpting words in wire is promising but not well realized.

Nancy Monk shows small, ordinary portraits overlaid with painted patterns. Leslie Kneisel is represented by two wall-mounted cushions, embroidered with a surreal continuum of human and animal figures. Samantha Fields presents tedious digital prints of mutant animals (recently shown at Dirt Gallery), and Eung Ho Park rounds off the group with a charming assemblage of bottle caps painted with eyeballs and mounted on the wall in two tall, vibrant stripes.

Solway Jones, 5377 Wilshire Blvd., (323) 937-7354, through Sept. 6. Closed Sundays and Mondays.