

GALLERY & STUDIO

New York Notebook

Another excellent exhibition that we were lucky enough to catch over the Summer months, a traditional time for group shows, was "Paper Invitational II," at Woodward Gallery, 476 Broome Street. The second in an annual series curated by gallery director **John Woodward**, the show was notable for its democratic mingling of very famous and less well known artists, an approach that makes for interesting juxtapositions and gives at least the more talented newcomers an opportunity to shine in stellar company.

There were even some neglected, woefully underrated artists such as **Morris Graves**, who was represented by a characteristically poignant work called "Wounded Gull, 1967," and **Robert Indiana**, with two studies for the "Love" series that made him famous in the sixties but became such hippie icons that they ended up being the bane of his career. But now that the Summer of Love is ancient history, they look like classics again!

John Marin is another matter, a pioneering modernist whose importance is beyond dispute, as "East River, 1951"—a tiny, exquisite watercolor with a hefty price-tag—demonstrated quite well. Among the other more pricey items were a pastel by **Roy Lichtenstein** from 1949, when he was still an abstract artist obviously in the thrall of **Arshille Gorky**, and a charming picture of a bug in colored pencil on cardboard by **Bill Traylor**, whose stock has also soared with the rise of the "Outsider" market. Other big names in the show included **Robert Motherwell**, **Andy Warhol**, **Joseph Albers**, **Adolph Gottlieb**, **Jasper Johns**, **Jean-Michel Basquiat**, and **Keith Haring**, all of whom were represented by predictably solid work.

Even more exciting, though, was discovering the work of less familiar artists such as **Bo Joseph**, whose mixed media drawing "Chemical Wedding" featured a flowingly protoplasmic blob-like form with a vaguely figurative feeling, suggesting some weirdly mutilated descendent of **Dubuffet's** famous cow—albeit grazing in a field of esoteric signs and symbols. Only, as the slightly ominous, science fictional title of his work suggests, **Bo Joseph** appears to be dealing with less light-hearted notions than **Dubuffet**. Like the unsung contemporary Belgian master **Octave Landuyt**, **Joseph** probes the mutation of matter with an intensity that sometimes causes him to bore right through the paper, causing holes, like gaping wounds, that further enhance the rugged tactile appeal of his mixed media drawings in tempera, oil pastel, ink, gesso, and acrylic ... In any case, on the strength of this single intriguing piece, we can safely state that **Bo Joseph** is an artist well worth watching.

Yet another new discovery was **Margaret Morrison**, a West Virginia artist whose figurative oils on paper of dreamy children in rooms that morph metaphysically into landscapes combine mundane and surreal elements in a uniquely evocative manner. **Morrison's** dark, moody pictures are somehow scarier and more subtly unsettling than the early work of **Eric Fischl**—even without overtly psychosexual overtones. The final revelation in "Paper Invitational II" was **Sybil Gibson**, a self-taught artist whose "Portrait in Oval," a primly simplified female figure in a cameo-format painted on what appears to be a sheet of shirt cardboard, suggests that she could give eventually rival even **Bill Traylor** as a hot item for collectors of Outsider art.