

GALLERIES: FEBRUARY 19, 1992

By Andrew Mangravite – Art Critic, Philadelphia Welcomat After Dark, Dennis Auffyery's Pulsing Energy

Dennis Auffyery is two artists in one, both prodigiously talented. He's as angry and compelling a social satirist as any in our tradition; he's also a splendid and expressive colorist whose landscapes are a song. It would probably make more sense to deal with his conflicting concerns (art as statement/art as pleasure) separately, but, I doubt that these concerns are separate in the artist's skull. Everything in the show "White Man's View" is boldly conceived, expressively colored and jumping with life. It's just that Auffyery is sometimes angry and sometimes joyous.



HOLBEIN, TOTENTANZ WOODCUT

"Ghost of Redlining," "New Middle Class," "Fear and Ignorance," "White Man's View" and "City Tableau" are angry unfunny works driven by a fierce, jibing desperation. When things are this bad, a laugh is as good as a clenched fist. In City Tableau, "we even get a capering skeleton- the real Mister Bones perhaps, but more likely Mister Totentanz here to remind us just how amazingly long-lived an artistic concept can be."



FEAR & IGNORANCE, 86 X 42, 1990

From the world of Medieval woodcuts to the bombed-out neighborhoods ("Ghosts of Redlining") of 1990 Philadelphia, he still stands for dissolution and decay, chaos and the suspension of normal rules in short, Bad News. Auffyery's work might be lugubrious if he weren't such a ferociously talented fellow. Life-force literally ripples through his work. No amount of neglect or decay will still this artist's drive to create. To get his vision down on canvas where it may perhaps survive him. The landscapes aren't as desperate as the social scenes- neither are they as much fun – but there are some moments of transcendent beauty. "Monte Verde", Costa Rica, "Italian Landscape" and "Cota Rica" are just lovely works of art. You need not go any deeper than that. But if you want to go deeper, there's "Tryst" and "Limon," beautiful examples of lyricism in art. There's also, "Italian Pheasant," as powerfully expressive and colorful a study of a dead bird as any you're likely to encounter.



ITALIAN PHEASANT, 26 X 24, 1991

Unlike the hunter, who can only stalk and kill and eat the pheasant, the artist can effectively create beauty and a new - albeit non organic - life from the dead. It always amazes me that we take our artists and the fact that men have walked the moon so much for granted. Dennis Aulfiery is certainly an artist 'worthy of our support. He may in his own way be something of an angry prophet. He certainly is a talented man, if nothing but "Treehouse Mural Study," an Expressionist phantasmagoria of animal and vegetative life; were on display, it would be worth a trip to see. But with another 50 odd siblings accompanying it....