

THE PERKS OF L.A.

By KIRSTEN OLDS

Not for the caffeine-intolerant, *Hot Coffee* is, well, exactly my cup of tea. A six-artist exhibit at Artists Space, *Hot Coffee* probes deep into the mindset of Los Angeles life. A wide variety of media, themes and

HOT COFFEE
Artists Space
38 Greene St
431-5160

space combine to produce a feel of empty, optimistic unease. The exhibit opens up mental associations, but resists large scale closure. So take a sip of *Hot Coffee*, but beware, it may not satisfy your thirst.

The first work displayed upon entering is an installation of different textiles called *Untitled #13* by Kent Young. Turquoise, white, rectangles, squares, black, soiled, frayed, terry-cloth, satin... these fabrics reinvent formalist concerns with an edge, reminding me exactly why cotton is "the fabric of our lives."

Andrea Bowers' work focuses on people. Her *Spectacular Appearances* series is certainly not that: the people depicted are blanketed in white, random travelers in empty space. Her *Woman in Philadelphia* is drawn at an angle to the left of the paper, the white expanse stretching into great unease. *3 Men in Miami* is a depiction of a sunburned, grim group, boasting on their shirts commercial icons—Reebok, Hooters. In front of the three *Spectacular Appearances* drawings, two monitors play different scenes from a baseball game. But instead of focusing on "America's National Pastime," the cameras capture the audience: hooting, yelling, big blond hair, baseball caps, and popcorn—this is America.

Julie Becker is the youngest artist in the

exhibit, but her youth is definitely an advantage. She presents a glance into a sphere of empty influence. In her works are pictures of room plan on a wall, a goldfish in a bowl, and an empty Magnavox box. These are the remnants of pop culture, the effects of a crossover between academia, technology and everyday life.

The diversity of media used exemplifies

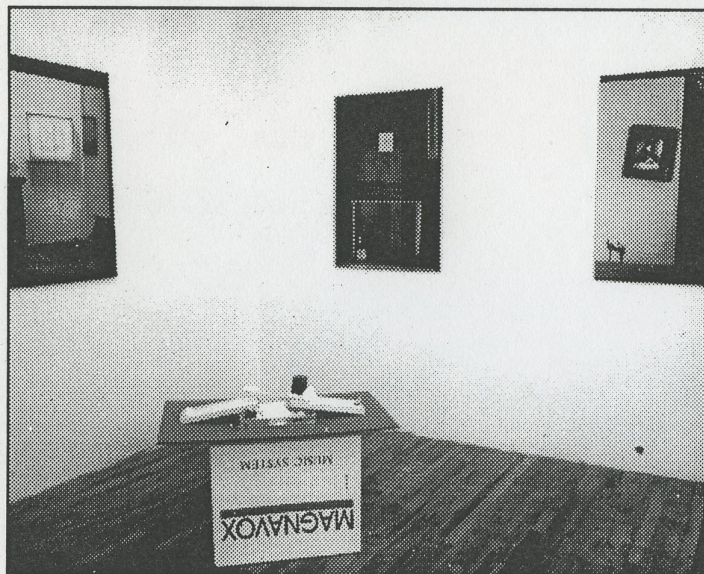


PHOTO COURTESY OF ARTIST'S SPACE - ARTWORK COURTESY OF JULIE BECKER

the new problems of communication and art in twentieth century America. Marina Rosenfeld contributes to the exhibit a video projection of shadows dancing to phantom music, a golden orange backdrop glowing like atomic decay. Laura Owens contrasts this minute film projection with a large untitled painting of perspective orthogonals in space. Two amoeboid pools of paint grace

the canvas, and life perches in the form of squiggles at the top of the frame. It seems that life is lonely in the great suburbia non-city.

Dave Muller explores the ideas of commercialized art and concept, especially in his installation *Expanded Card Set*. Large postcard like-signs stand on the floor, bearing advertisements for gallery exhibits and

"PoeTic" discourse. He writes, "The artist will attempt to satisfy the desires of patrons, within certain aesthetic parameters...." How to make money and not compromise artistic ideals? Here Muller provides an answer, but it just seems like another poke at the empty optimism of the modern mind. His other pieces, include a film still of *Nowhere* covered

by iridescent cellophane, a display of cards promoting a visit to Berlin, and an acrylic drawing of such banal objects as a pumpkin, a bed, an ice-cream, and a book called *Summer Everyday*. Although it may be summer everyday in L.A., it appears from this exhibit that heatstroke and smog could send people inside for a coffee break. But beware, it may scald you.

Eggs-actly Right

By KIRSTEN OLDS

In the Project Space area of the Artists Space Gallery is an exhibition by Anna Gili, a design artist who, according to Alessandro Mendini, "chooses not to simulate, acquire and paraphrase the violent experience of male design." Her exhibit exemplifies this point: eggs of different sizes fill the room in embryonic comfort. Sixty eggs hang from the ceiling at various heights, and sixty are installed in an

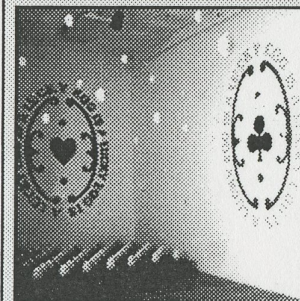


PHOTO COURTESY OF ARTIST'S SPACE
ARTWORK COURTESY OF ANNA GILI

aluminum container on the floor. In the same room Gili painted eggs on the walls, with the caption around it:

"A Lucky Egg is A Lucky Egg is A" This delve in Steinian reasoning plays with traditional definitions, reinforcing Mendini's comment. In the back room is a piece called *Cat Totem*, which is a series of four illuminated totems, with silkscreen cats painted on them. The exhibit mixes machine-made pieces, such as *Win*, which contains 100 stainless steel glasses, and then handmade work, such as the eggs painted on the walls. By introducing ideas, such as the egg, that are central to people, she makes the impersonal world of design very human.