

streets of Manhattan without setting foot indoors from September 1981 to September 1982. In another, he tied himself to collaborator Linda Montano with an eight-foot rope, which stayed attached from July 1983 to July 1984. These "One Year Performances" were capped by his most recent project, which terminated at the end of the millennium. For this opus, Hsieh made art for thirteen years without showing it publicly, and then proclaimed that the art made during that period was that "I kept myself alive."

"Tehching Hsieh: One Year Performance Lecture/Documents 1978-1999" offered a full record of these works. Presented as a series of documents, the exhibition was a spare but richly informative display of photographs and project descriptions. The show's centerpiece, a 1980-81 work for which he punched a time clock on the hour, every hour, for a year, brought to the fore the sense of the passage of time intrinsic to all of Hsieh's art. He took a photograph of himself each time he punched his time card, standing in the same place and with the same placid expression; the 8,760 frames were projected in rapid succession on the wall showing the artist's changing appearance, marked most clearly by the growth of his hair, from shorn to shoulder length. Embellishing these excerpts was digitized documentation of all six projects, including records of such arcane data as Hsieh's movements and expenses incurred while living outside and affidavits by witnesses vowing that the seals on the artist's cage and rope were never broken.

While such documentation of these performances has been shown before, for this exhibition a photograph from each performance has been enlarged and silk-screened in an edition of 365. While creating relics from ephemeral performances is often necessary for Conceptual and body artists to make a living and, often, to secure their place in history, it is hard to reconcile this move with work that is itself partly predicated on the critique of the reification and commodification of the art object. Hsieh's work, having been until now uncompromisingly unconventional, becomes undermined by the decision to transform documentation into reliquary artifacts. What's more, the silk screens and DVDs lack the directness and eloquence of the performances themselves, serving only to encapsulate and prettify what Hsieh has spent so much time and energy drawing out.

Since December 31, 1999, Hsieh has



Tehching Hsieh, *One Year Performance 1981-1982* (Outdoor piece), 2001, color photograph, 30 x 40".

claimed that he probably will no longer make art. It appears that art and life have merged so seamlessly that art has disappeared from his life and his life has disappeared from art.

—Kirby Gookin

JUDE TALLICHET

SARA MELTZER GALLERY

If Buckminster Fuller had got his way, midtown Manhattan today would find itself under a giant geodesic dome. The utopist engineer's 1962 proposal for such a structure (meant to protect urban dwellers against smog and, given the cold war, perhaps even nuclear fallout) represents the kind of vision—partly idealistic, partly pragmatic—to which Jude Tallichet pays homage in her recent show "Left." Architecture is presented here as being equally capable of accommodating forward-looking theories and pure utilitarian necessity. A wide swath of its history—from the low-lying Mongolian yurt to Ted Kaczynski's Montanan shack—is referenced by way of iconic examples.

"Left" comprises eight beige, unpainted, sandblasted-Plexiglas models of familiar building types (a barn, a pyramid, three teepees) and a few definitive landmarks (e.g., Fuller's Single and Double Domes) that rest on gray Plexiglas islands, which in turn float on a sea of Astroturf. The archipelago arrangement imparts a sense of the uniqueness of the societies that developed the constructions, while also permitting certain affinities to surface: The miniature Dymaxion House, Fuller's 1927 prototype of a

unit adaptable to any environment (the neologism supposedly stands for "dynamism plus efficiency"), shares classic functionality with the time-tested simplicity of the nearby yurt. Despite the enormous differences between their origins, both of these shelters attempt to embody the supreme combination of form and function.

On their own, the sculptures are fairly plain, resembling scaled-down reproductions built by a hobbyist. The installation is brought to life by the rhythmic, spoken-word sound collage emanating from speakers hidden within the structures (the artist's trademark). Tallichet taped her friends as they read texts selected from an eclectic mix of manifestos and statements, including Richard Serra's "Verb List," "Formulary for a New Urbanism" by the Lettrist Ivan Chitchevlov, and several quotes from Fuller himself ("Roam home to a dome . . ."); musician Susie Ibarra's lively drumming in the background lends a beatnik ambience. One is compelled to wander among the models to distinguish the separate recordings, each of which projects out of only one "building." It's a bit jarring to make a quick shift from the diatribe of Valerie Solanas (shooter of Warhol and writer of the *SCUM Manifesto*) to the anti-Hollywood rhetoric of Dogma 95.

When one steps back from the objects and takes in the installation and sound track as a whole, the individual utterances get lost in what comes across as a jazzy cacophony of undifferentiated ideas. The suggestion is that if all these propositions for social change were averaged out, the perfect formula for

utopia would finally be found. Tallichet could thus be accused of muddying the issues by reducing the texts to mere stand-ins for revolutionary or progressive thought. Yet what prevents her project from simply lapsing into sentimental reverie over visionary philosophers is the way in which she highlights both the tensions and the correspondences among the different categories of production (art, architecture, political protest, etc.). One has to concentrate in order to gain access to the particular views of the single speakers as they rub shoulders.

During the past decade, with the fin de siècle looming, it seemed that many artists were mining the twentieth century's proposals for improved living standards as dated material ripe for parody or nostalgia. "Left" certainly takes a similarly playful approach to the theories espoused by Tallichet's cast of characters, but the result is not the diminishment of such forceful expressions. It's just that close listening is needed to keep these voices from disappearing in the noise of history.

—Gregory Williams

MARTIN MULL

DAVID BEITZEL GALLERY

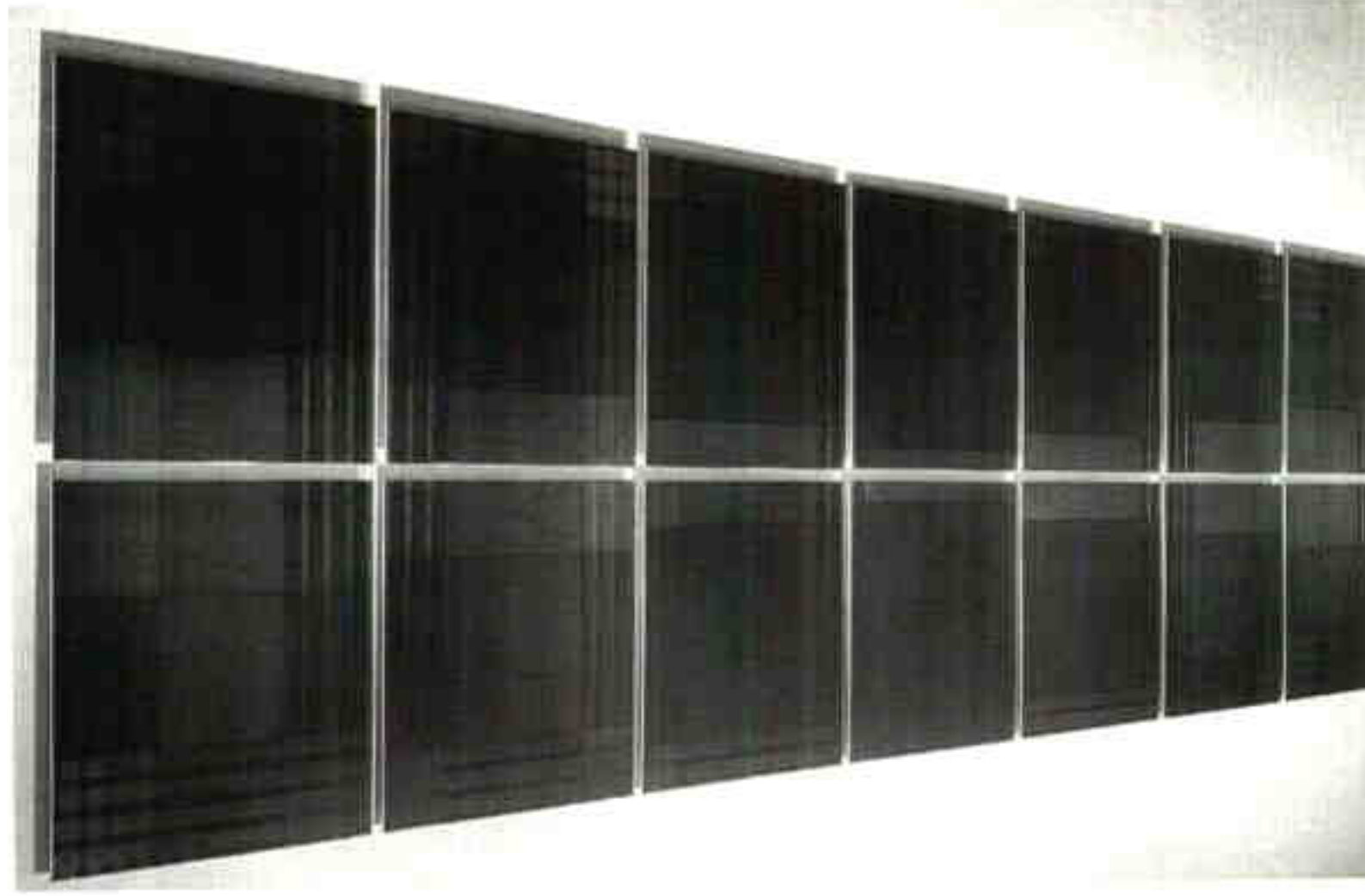
Martin Mull would like nothing more than for us to ignore his celebrity. He has repeatedly referred to acting as his "day job," admitting that earning respect as a visual artist is his highest priority. But Mull's two careers are of a piece. From '70s stand-up and roles on *Mary*



Jude Tallichet, "Left," 2001. Installation view.



Martin Mull, *Ariadne's Thread*, 2000, oil on linen, 72 x 60".



James Stroud, *Janus I*, 2001, oil on aluminum, 41 x 146". Installation view.

Hartman, Mary Hartman and *Fernwood 2Night* to his mid-'80s cable special *The History of White People in America* (divided into episodes called "White Religion," "White Politics," "White Crime," and "White Stress"), Mull the actor has focused on white American cultural myths and stereotypes. And Mull the painter brings to bear the same earnest irreverence, seriousness of intent, and dark humor.

Mull usually works on a large scale, in oil on canvas. Seven of his most recent paintings (all works 2000) were on view here, along with a selection of smaller watercolors, his preferred medium when he is on location. At the core of his works are sunny images of white folk that look as if they've been lifted from postwar family magazines like *Look* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, publications that staged what came to define the ideal American family: moms proffering cakes, dads in business suits, smiling boys and girls, and animals that accessorize the "white" existence—labradors, robins, Canadian geese, and cows from the dairyland of Mull's native Ohio.

Mull's recontextualization of these stock images is not entirely original: Postwar America has been subjected to a fairly extensive excavation. The funny yet terrifying irony of conformist textbook and magazine images and instructional films like *Duck and Cover* has generated a cottage industry for everyone from academics to indie-comic artists ever since the late '60s (and Nixon) blew the lid off the myth of '50s white America. Nickelodeon provides full evenings of morality plays like *Father Knows Best* and *Leave It to Beaver*—

hours of entertainment for generations of younger Americans. But Mull's paintings breathe fresh life into the trope. Painted in nostalgic colors (yellowed whites, chalky blues and greens), his landscapes and genre scenes are full of distortions and fragments. *Ariadne's Thread* features a prepubescent girl in hula position (sans hoop) sandwiched between two landscapes: the one in which she stands and the inverted suburban house and lawn that serve as "sky." The smiling mother of *Fool's Paradise III* shares canvas space with four supersize animals—two birds, a fox, and a squirrel painted with choppy paint-by-numbers strokes in hues reminiscent of those on flannel sleeping-bag linings.

Mining the veins of banal white culture and turning its landscapes (literally) upside down, Mull transforms the milquetoast creatures of postwar America into exotics, relics of a culture that existed only in magazines, in movies, and on television. In some ways, however, his work is a truly accurate document of that era, since it lays bare the distortions implicit in normalizing one culture—the white American family—at the expense of all others.

—Martha Schwendener

BOSTON

JAMES STROUD

BARBARA KRAKOW
GALLERY

To make the paintings in his latest exhibition, "Linear Strategies," James Stroud secured square aluminum panels to a

metal rack like those used by commercial printers and applied blue, red, and yellow oil-based printing inks in grids and stripes with a roller. Despite the limitations of this procedure and the exacting rigor of his techniques, borrowed from printmaking (he is also a master printer), the geometric abstractions that result are surprisingly luminous and seductive.

Six of the seven grand installations on view were long rectangular arrangements of the painted aluminum squares (all works 2001). Mounted on hidden wood supports, the twenty-by-twenty-inch panels seemed to hover about an inch from the white wall. The hard edges of the aluminum and the precisely painted stripes, rectangles, and squares are systematically linear, but the layered surfaces appear to glow. The two largest works, *Janus I* and *Janus II* (named after the two-headed Roman god), each comprise two horizontal, symmetrical rows of seven panels. Centered on each panel is a large square of ultramarine, similar in tone and effect to Yves Klein's IKB monochromes. Surrounded by magenta, green, and orange stripes (the result of laying a blue glaze over highly pigmented bands of red and yellow), these blue squares dominated the installations and gave rise to architectonic patterns that unified and activated the arrangements: In *Janus I*, the blue squares steadily decrease in size as you move from the inner to the outer panels; in *Janus II*, the order is reversed so that the squares are largest on the outermost panels. (The artist referred to the side-by-side installation of the two pieces as "looking into the future and the past.") In other works,

such as *Potemkin* and *End Games*, the blue squares become red-and-blue grids; some, like *Orpheus*, are distinctly plaidlike and less dynamic.

The seventh work on view, *Untitled*, perhaps suggests a new direction. Five panels hung in an overlapping vertical arrangement: The bottom panel leaned two inches out from the wall; slipped behind it was the bottom edge of the next panel, which itself leaned out from the wall to allow the panel above to slip behind it; and so on. Stroud and an assistant used an orbital sander to create metallic swirls on the surfaces. He then sprayed the back of each plate with orange paint so that an incandescent glow was reflected onto the wall behind. The artist nicknamed the piece "Judd-lite," for its obvious references to the late Minimalist master's vertical arrangements of anodized aluminum and Plexiglas. While all Stroud's work exists somewhere between painting, print, and sculpture, *Untitled* seems to represent a move away from his highly technical printmaking strategies and toward the methods and means of painting and sculpture.

—Francine Koslow Miller

PHILADELPHIA / NEW YORK

LISA YUSKAVAGE

INSTITUTE OF
CONTEMPORARY ART /
MARIANNE BOESKY
GALLERY

Masturbation is without a doubt a great subject for painting. The real question is why more artists haven't taken it on as wholeheartedly as Lisa Yuskavage has. I'm referring not just to her depictions of women actually playing with themselves, such as *Interior: Big Blonde with Beaded Jacket*, 1997, or *True Blonde*, 1999, two examples from the ICA's five-year survey; surprisingly enough, such directness is not the forte of this notoriously in-your-face artist. More to the point are the paintings of women indulging in a less specific but all the more voluptuous self-touching: for instance, the way the twilight figure fingers her hair in *Honeymoon*, 1998. *Honeymoon*? There's no sign of any groom. But Yuskavage's brides without bachelors hardly pine; instead, they are totally self-absorbed. When two or three of them share a canvas, they seem only robotically, incommunicatively coordinated. Even when their butts turn