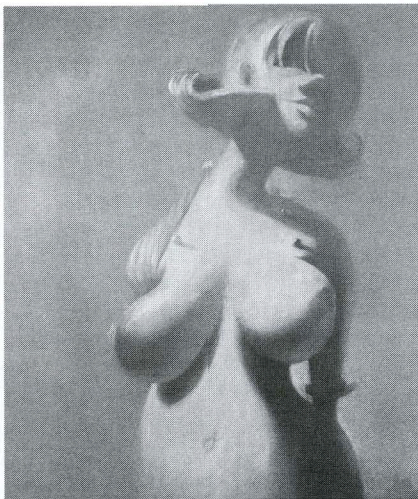


Gabriel Orozco, *Offside*, 1996, computer-generated, plastic-coated print, 78 1/2 x 62 3/4".



Lisa Yuskavage, *Motherfucking Rock*, 1996, oil on linen, 42 x 36".

flects the Brazilian Neo-Concretist rethinking of Constructivism as an elaborate form of subjective expression. That is, the Neo-Concretists attempted to use aesthetic language to understand and change the subject's experience of daily life by making objects that were often formally complex but that depended on audience participation for their full meaning to emerge. Neo-concrete artist Lygia Clark, for example, developed a kind of therapy, based on the interaction of "patients" with simple, malleable objects, a praxis of art into life in which the spectator's very relationship to his or her body became central. With his own system of circular shapes placed across everything from images of sports events to interior decorating to house plants, Orozco seemed to be engaging, albeit playfully, in much the same effort to erect a bridge between the aesthetic realm and everyday existence. Thus, this exhibition raised the possibility that Orozco's oeuvre can be placed not only within a European and North American Conceptual tradition, but within a completely different art-historical genealogy, one that links Mexico City and São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Caracas, and that has long been identified with stretching the limits of artistic practice.

—Carlos Basualdo

Translated from the Spanish by Christian Viveros-Fauné.

LISA YUSKAVAGE

BOESKY GALLERY

Five chalk-white cast-Hydrocal figurines of grotesquely infantilized women with bulbous boobs, bloated bellies, and ballooning asses each strike their own lewd pose. No, this motley crew is not a Franklin

Mint series in honor of Larry Flynt, it's the latest cast of characters to spring from Lisa Yuskavage's twisted psyche—her statuettes *The Bad Habits: Asspicking, Foodeating, Headshrinking, Socialclimbing, Motherfucker*, 1996. In the past Yuskavage has tested the limits of good bad taste by painting eroticized prepubescent girls' heads, fleshy blondes in bikinis, fat-bottomed girls, and a busty maiden in a blue tutu who resembles nothing so much as the St. Pauli girl sans serving apron. Looking back, her earlier paintings seem to have an air of good, clean, albeit slightly off-color fun, but in this latest show Yuskavage has traded in her Mel Ramos bag of tricks and pumped her models up with some serious attitude—they're bigger, badder, and uglier than ever before. Gone are the playful bubbleheaded sex kittens; in their place stand hardened, leering, demonic, mutants who taunt, tempt, and threaten viewers with their very presence (think Tura Satana in training or baby Barb Wire). Like Flynt, Howard Stern, or even Paul McCarthy, Yuskavage is banking on shock tactics to attract an audience. By spreading her saccharine pastel palette around exaggeratedly sexualized nymphets (all of whom feature accentuated turned-up noses, protruding pouts, and enough tits and ass to make even the biggest *Hustler* fan do a double take), she's daring you to hate her. Pushing all your buttons at once, she's begging you to call her obscene, gross, perverse. But be warned. If you play her game and condemn her blend of soft core and straight outta Toys 'R' Us kewpie doll affectations, you'll be labeled hopelessly PC and Yuskavage gets the last laugh.

Yuskavage envisions herself as a Drag King-cum-painter—in her own words,

she's "painting paintings that take the point of view of a man." "I decided to make paintings that would be the dumbest, most far-out extension of what I was trying to say [about] male desire." But given the array of saddle-bag butts, stumplike arms, rotund stomachs, and exaggerated boobs she presents, it's as if Yuskavage is peddling a hybrid of kiddie-porn and Channel-35 fetishes as the norm of the "male gaze"—slippery ground, to say the least.

Yuskavage makes a slightly more persuasive claim for her canvases when she contends that they exploit "what's dangerous and what scares me about myself: misogyny, self-deprecations, social climbing. . . . My work has always been about things in myself that I feel incredibly uncomfortable with and embarrassed by." Her vampy fleshpots mount a much more compelling critique of socially inscribed images of the feminine when read as symptoms of a woman's own psyche and phobias: her problems with food, flesh, sexuality, and internalized misogyny. These paintings ask, for instance, why women artists can't express an ambiguous relationship to their own and to other women's bodies. Why is it that for a woman artist to be considered acceptably feminist she must paint fleshy mounds of femaleness not as menacing she-devils but as loving representatives of some great goddess figure? Why shouldn't she be able, instead, to examine the construction of desire and the erotic in less than utopian ways? Yuskavage's canvases take us into that disorienting place where desire, fear, self-loathing, and sexuality intersect, and whether we love, hate, or just laugh at these paintings, we all harbor similar phobias.

—Sydney Pokorny

RENÉE GREEN

PAT HEARN GALLERY

Renée Green's most recent installation, *Partially Buried*, 1996, worked both sides of Walter Benjamin's well-worn dictum: "Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things." Both sides, for Green's installation functioned at once as an allegory of the current status and effectiveness of "site-specific" practices as well as a complex documentation of an actual art-historical ruin, Robert Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed*, 1970. Constructed as an illustration of the process of entropy, Smithson dumped earth on a woodshed standing on the Kent State University campus to the point that its central beam cracked. Soon afterward, the infamous Kent State massacre turned Smithson's "non-monument" into a full-blown monument; this status, however, was short-lived. Only a few years later, the woodshed's central beam completely collapsed, the university quietly had the mess and its attendant memories cleared, and the *Woodshed's* dedication to entropy shifted from allegorical image to reality. Today, as Green displayed in both photographs and videos, its site has been literally effaced by a ramble of shrubbery and natural growth. "In the ruin history has physically merged into the setting," Benjamin continues. "In the process of decay, and in it alone, the events of history shrivel up and become absorbed in the setting."

While documenting the decay, *Partially Buried* did all it could to combat this "shriveling up" of history not only by taking up Smithson's piece as her subject but by utilizing his dialectic of site/nonsite as the installation's governing format. The gallery was transformed into an elaborate "nonsite" mapping various interwoven sites and trajectories, only one of which was *Woodshed's* actual Kent State location. Upon entering the gallery one was confronted with three objects on a table: an aerial photograph of the Kent State campus, a group of James Michener bestsellers collected in Ohio, and several fragments of the *Woodshed* itself in a Plexiglas container (literalizing, in a way, Smithson's onetime definition of the nonsite as a "fragment of a greater fragmentation"). On facing walls in the main gallery, Green then staged a stark confrontation between two series of photographs: on one wall, an aleatory sequence of color photographs documenting Green's own travel to, around, and through the Kent State campus; on the other, black and white, rephotographed images from the pages of Michener's best-seller