

while the big ring suggests a halo, and the poised element—the most complex form in the work—suggests a crown. Its twisted, torch-cut filigree hints at being a written message, like the script submerged in some early Smiths, but the eye cannot disentangle it enough to read it.

Di Suvero handles his material with such authority that one might not realize that his work is full of passages in which inch-thick steel has been looped and twisted as if it were toffee. We can barely imagine the tools and techniques that produce this kind of fluency, but di Suvero must be one of the few artists to possess them. —Kenneth Baker

“American Pictorialism”

CATHERINE EDELMAN

“American Modernism”

CAROL EHLERS

Chicago

Although Pictorialism and modernism coexisted for a time, they have always been at odds. The one's soft-focus, turn-of-the-century poetics is fundamentally out of sync with the other's frank insistence on clarity and detail. This fascinating joint exhibition traced the development of both from a common source—Alfred Stieglitz's *Steerage* (1907), an image as much about geometry as it is about social class, and the work Stieglitz considered his most important.

At Edelman, Pictorialism's trail led into shadow, mystery, and allure. In George Seeley's tonalist-inspired *Winter Landscape* (1926), light doesn't so much illuminate as settle like a mist. Portraits, too, emphasized mood rather than likeness. In Consuelo Kanaga's *Portrait of Alice Rohrer* (ca. 1930), the subject cocks her head back, accentuating a long sensuous neck, while her eyes stare away into something beyond.

At Ehlers, modernism picked its way through alienation, oddity, and the everyday with such classic images as Paul Strand's *Wall Street* (1915), with its massive darkened windows looming over passing pedestrians. Shunning darkroom trickery, such straightforward approaches belie the complexity of the modernist's vision. In Lee Friedlander's snapshot-like *New York City* (1963), for instance, a man and a woman are caught in a glass-door maze of reflection and fragmentation in which images at once blur and appear crystal clear.

But neither show was content with being only a history lesson. Works by contemporary photographers including Sally Mann and Lynn Geesaman brought the opposing styles up to date. Pictorialism was alive



Consuelo Kanaga,
Portrait of Alice Rohrer, ca.1930, vintage gelatin silver print, 10" x 7 1/2".
Catherine Edelman.



Bill Jacobson,
Thought Series #1638, 1995, gelatin silver print, 24" x 20".
Robert Klein.

in works such as James Fee's 1995 *San Francisco Skyline SF*, with its murky emulsion-stained and scratch-filled sky. Modernism proved especially strong in works by Terry Evans, whose landscapes, like the diptych *Prairie Potholes Central SD Oct 1997*, a pinkish ochre expanse pocketed with pools of brilliant blue, underscore the reclaimed beauty of once desecrated terrains.

—Garrett Holg

Bill Jacobson

ROBERT KLEIN

Boston

Bill Jacobson's out-of-focus gelatin-silver prints used to be so overexposed they read like charcoal smudges. Some of those photographs

hung in this show, providing sharp contrast with his more recent images of underexposed nocturnes filled with gravitas and grief.

Most of the pictures in the "Thought Series" are portraits. As with his earlier prints, they strive to capture a passing moment, the rest stop on the road from life to death. Jacobson has spent much of the past decade fashioning elegiac photographs that confront life's transitory nature and depict the very flesh of grief. He continues to wrestle with that theme here.

Thought Series #2319 shows a man's face tilted upward, his eyes closed, lips pressed grimly together. His aquiline nose dominates the image, pulling it into a formal play of line and shadow as the line of the nose drops to the hollow of cheekbone and eye. The man's look of nobility is underscored by his utter stillness. With the sharp angles of his face blurred by the soft focus, it feels as if we've already lost him and are looking at his death mask.

Jacobson intersperses these darker moments with figure studies, like *Thought Series #2202*, which shows the grace of lines and hollows in the posture of a bowed, seated man.

Two photographs leave the figure behind and capture the quiet of lapping water. While these don't stand out on their own, they act as a welcome respite in an otherwise intense and rigorous exhibition.

—Cate McQuaid

“Symbols/Objects”

C. GRIMALDIS

Baltimore

In this show featuring mostly installations by three Greek artists, contemporary concerns were cleverly fused with ancient remnants from Greece's long cul-

tural past.

Effie Halivopoulou directly refers to that past by emulating fragments of ancient Greek texts. *Interactors II* consists of hanging sheets and wall-mounted light boxes. The texts, printed on rice paper, are illuminated from beneath, prompting thoughts about a life developing inside a cocoon.

The old coexists with the new in Angelos Antonopoulos's sculptures, which generally take the shape of a disembodied foot placed within a metal frame on the wall. The isolated appendage seems like a battered, fire-scorched sculptural fragment appropriated for a surreal display. Antonopoulos is at his best in the show's highlight, *Sculpture*, a leglike plaster piece suspended from the ceiling. One end of the leg has a realistically rendered foot, while the other is open to reveal a hollow interior. Depending on the viewer's vantage point, this sculpture could suggest the leg of an ancient statue or a vessel long enough to qualify as a modern plumbing pipe.

Yannis Ziogas emphasizes linguistic connections between the past and the present in his *Alphabet Book*. Here, 24 panels consist of words and computer-generated images (including photographs of the artist himself) that comment on the letters of the Greek alphabet. The panel for "I," for instance, includes an image of a man falling, suggesting Icarus's descent from the sky. In another work, *From Utopia to Epekina*, a model train runs along a circular track that takes it through a sandy landscape punctuated by brightly colored, Erector set-like constructions. Bearing no more than a piece of string as its cargo, this two-car train goes in circles through a setting reminiscent of an abandoned circus. Although this might seem like a depressing scenario, Ziogas is as playful as a child with a toy train set.

—Mike Giuliano

Isamu Noguchi

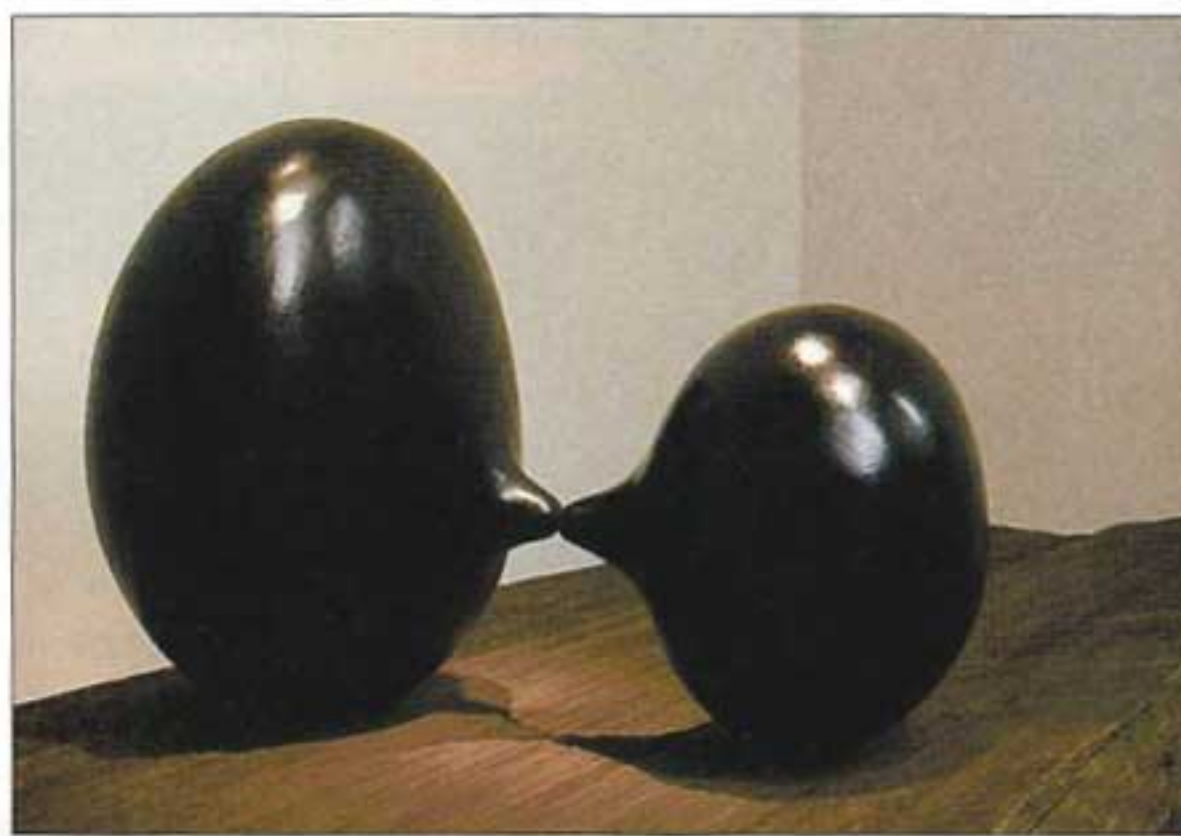
BRYAN OHNO

Seattle

Particularly after 1960, the accomplishments of Isamu Noguchi (1904–88) ranged from the shallow to the sublime. Both ends of the scale were represented in this exhibition. Noguchi is best known in Seattle for his large-scale stone sculptures in Volunteer Park and the plaza of the downtown Federal Building. But instead of highlighting the artist's technical prowess, the gallery played up his virtuosity with almost weightless materials, such as paper, air, and



Yannis Ziogas, *From Utopia to Epekina III*, partial view, 1997–99, mixed media, variable dimensions.
C. Grimaldis.



Isamu Noguchi, *Mitosis*, 1962, bronze, 15" x 22" x 16".
Bryan Ohno.



Robert Kushner, *Ash*, 1991, acrylic on sari with variegated leaf, 74" x 44".
Bellas Artes.

electric light.

The centerpiece of the show was an installation of 16 paper lamp sculptures, three to six feet long, hung vertically like crystals from a chandelier. Their crumpled elegance was especially well showcased in this grouping, which encouraged viewers to compare witty variations on controlled informality. Unfortunately, these nuances were caricatured in the exhibition design, which bordered on theme-park schmaltz—

Japanese and American newspapers covered the walls, a family of little Japanese wooden sandals huddled in a corner, and mood music tinkled in the background.

These effects may not have been out of place with compositions that border on the cliché, like *Cloud Mountain* (1982), with its flat metal cutouts of hill or boulder shapes stacked in front of one another on the floor. But the paper sculptures and smart little bronzes like *Mitosis* (1962), composed of matching biomorphs posed on a low table, are strong enough to stand on their own.

—Patricia Failing

Robert Kushner

BELLAS ARTES

Santa Fe

This exhibition of Robert Kushner's floral paintings on silk and paper exemplified the opulence that the artist's work has come to embody. His generous applications of oil and acrylic, sprinklings of glitter and bronze powder, and abundant silver and gold leaf made here for a lustrous display.

A founder of the Pattern and Decoration movement of the mid-1970s, Kushner has focused on elevating the decorative arts from craft to fine art. Here, the artist's esthetic and technical mastery was put to best use in the paintings he did on sari, garments Kushner brought back from India. With their delicate, tapering brush strokes, elegant compositions, and serene renderings of nature, the long, narrow strips of silk called to mind the art of Asian scrolls. Kushner combined, to great advantage, the gold patterns, beads, and transparent mesh of the sari with his oversize, painted depictions of tree leaves and branches.

Two of the most striking of these paintings were *Choke Cherry*, in which lush gold leaves and red cherries are set against a gold and maroon background, and the more austere *Birch*, in winter tones of white, silver, and black.

With metallic layers of paint yielding lavish finishes, the rich compositions of flowers and plants proved Kushner a magician with surfaces.

—Dottie Indyke