



Bud's 20.5" x 61" x 1.5" oil paint, wood & lead 2002

Art Wrap

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Marie Ringwald at the Troyer Gallery (1710 Connecticut Ave. NW Tues. – Sat. 11-5) creates a cosmology of the American barn and industrial storage buildings. Ringwald grew up in the Bronx; but one feels a strong reverence in these works for the solitary denizens of the rural landscape. What is surprising is the diversity achieved within these fairly simple images. This is achieved through the use of materials that include wood and patinated copper as well as through the exploration of the structural elements of each work. Ringwald's use of color is what is perhaps the most personal element of each of these works and endows it all with a lyrical touch.

In "Storage Shed: Corrugated Lead" there is a feeling of weathering, there are shingles nailed on with visible nails. It is an iconic rendering of a building that hangs on the wall devoid of any external reference, yet somehow so surely is it scaled and achieved that it evokes its own environment.

The hot pink barn titled "Red Barn near Hobgood, NC" is unlike any barn I've ever seen and is made up of tongue-in-groove wood pieces and small panels that serve as window and doors. Ringwald has a very particularized vision that shows in the use and manipulation of her materials. In this work one sees this in how one door is made of rough wood, and the other of smooth wood and how that creates a specific poetry in the piece. "Red Tobacco Drying Barn" plays with diagonals, verticals and horizontals: here all structural elements function decoratively. In this particular work I feel that it is akin to buildings created to go with model railroads, a type of American folk art.

With "Robinson's Farm near Asheville" there is a jazzy jump in the composition. This piece is less concerned with its evocative function and is more concerned with the rhythms it plays. It is somehow free-spirited.

"Houses in Process: Wood" is also unusual in the way it makes use of unpainted wood. One reads it for the beauty of its use of the raw wood. It has more of the feeling of collage than any of the works. Its richness runs away with it.

"Large green Warehouse" is the most intricate piece and is almost Japanese in feeling. A totally different space comes into play. And "House in Process: Tin" is also collage-esque and could be a cousin of Motherwell's "Little Spanish Prison." A dash of glitz arrives in "Storage Shed: Copper."

"Two: Green Shed with Corrugated Roofs" reminds me of Anne Truitt's earliest mature work of picket fences in its search for a familiar image and a wish to find the deeper mythical quality within it. Ringwald succeeds in achieving a personal myth and surprises us in her delivery, in her intensity and freshness. (Through April 29)

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Robinson's Farm near Asheville, NC
9" x 10.5" x 1.75" paint, wood and plastic 2002