
The New York Times

'Still Working' 'Underknown Artists of Age in America'

*I.B.M. Building
590 Madison Avenue (at 56th
Street)
Through March 10*

In his introduction to the catalogue of "Still Working," the curator, Stuart Shedletsky, describes the New York art world as "a community more interested in newsy firsts than developed vision." Because he believed painters and sculptors over the age of 60 weren't getting a fair shake from galleries, Mr. Shedletsky (himself a painter and a teacher at Parsons School of Design) put together a show to expose their work to a broader public. Taking issue also with "the popularly held notion that little of artistic merit occurs west of the Hudson River or east of the San Andreas fault," he decided to seek out artists representing "regional developments" and "isolated lineages." His aims, in short, were thoroughly laudable.

The 32 painters and sculptors chosen by Mr. Shedletsky, who is 50, work in a variety of styles: from Surrealist to Expressionist, Biomorph to Hard-Edge, Impressionist to Decorative. While they come from all across the country, on any given day you could see a similar range of work by strolling through SoHo and along 57th Street. There is little trace here of the "old-age style" art historians hypothesize about, with its looseness and freedom from convention. Rather, the unifying factor is the rejection of certain genres by the artists: there are no Minimalist, Conceptual or post-modernist works.

The painters and sculptors in this exhibition remain committed to the ideal of the personal imagination, avoiding forms of art-making that subordinate the hand of the artist to impersonal processes or ideas.

Alas, most of the work here is competent but not extraordinary. The exceptions, curiously enough, are both from New York. David Slivka's sculptures are tangled knots of stripped and polished branches, throbbing with life on the border between vegetable and animal. Sal Sirugo's tiny ink drawings alternate between landscape and abstraction, evoking an image of infinite space inversely proportional to their actual size. The exhibition is accompanied by a series of superb photographs by Larry Fink, who uses flash, shadow and asymmetric composition to portray the artists and their studios. PEPE KARMELE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1995

Art in Review
