

## ART REVIEW

4 Facets of the  
Fit of Things

Otis-Parsons art gallery shows four L.A.-area artists in a group that strikes a neat balance. Artists have a common interest in the way things fit together. Otherwise they could not be more difficult, which makes for a lively experience.

Guy de Cointet has heretofore flummoxed this observer. On one hand, he is a performance artist and entrepreneur who writes and presents what one might call plays, if you use the term loosely. On the other, he brings forth little books and sheets covered with markings we are led to understand are some manner of code. This exhibition of drawings and one set piece are, first, far pleasanter to view than before. Handsome arrangements of ruler-straight lines have odd titles like "This is impossible, It must be a conspiracy."

At least part of the conspiracy is now clear. De Cointet appears to be fascinated with the underlying structure of things. If his plays do not make normal sense, at least it's clear they are plays, because they employ theatrical structure. If we cannot "read" his markings, we at least know they are systematized concepts.

Tom Holste is interested in the way painting becomes sculpture and vice versa. He has recently been up to making elaborate wall reliefs of painted geometric elements. They are freighted with heavy nostalgia for early moder-

nism a la Kandinsky and constructivist sculpture but they progressively convince us the possibilities are not used up. Until recently, Holste had a neoconstructivist comrade in Claude Kent who, alas, appears to have abandoned the form.

Photographers make up the other half of the exhibition. They continue the theme of structure but in radically opposite ways. Steve Kahn shows several sets of paired black-and-white oversize prints. Each pair consists of an anonymous doorway in a blank wall and a cloudscape over a low horizon. At first, each pair looks the same. In fact, they are all different. Apparently the interplay of the work intends to make us question the structure of our own perceptions. Why do we see the clouds as "atmosphere" and the walls as "solid" when they are visually and photographically identical? Why do we see things as different when they are the same and similar when they are dissimilar? The answers are fairly simple. The trouble with the work is that the questions are too complex.

Anthony Hernandez presents a photo essay, "Art as Social Reality." It looks like straight documentary photos of sculpture in public places and ranges democratically from the urban blight of the Triforium to works by Moore, Noguchi and Volkous. Hernandez's apparent objectivity dissolves when we see the works, good and bad, as altering the aesthetic ecology of their surroundings. One sci-fi sculpture looks like an invader from outer space on a quiet neighborhood. A Barnett Newman "Broken Obelisk" is downright iconoclastic in front of a church spire. Hernandez presents an unusually intelligent questioning of an establishment mentality that believes civic sculpture is always a good thing. He tells us the art establishment and civic bureaucracies simply have their unique ways of being dumb.

The exhibition by Otis-Parsons gallery director Hal Glicksman continues to Oct. 14. —WILLIAM WILSON