

# rachel uffner

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Art in Review

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HILARY HARNISCHFEGER

Never Work

191 Henry Street, at Clinton Street, Lower East Side

Hilary Harnischfeger makes an impressive, if cramped, debut at this tiny gallery on the border of the Lower East Side and Chinatown. Six small but densely layered works, made with paper, plaster and ink, coyly update Cubism and gestural abstraction.

Three boulderlike sculptures, titled "H," "C" and "G," sit casually on a round midcentury-modern table. Individually they bear a faint resemblance to ceramics by Ken Price and crumpled-metal sculptures by John Chamberlain, but the overall effect is that of a Japanese garden.



The drawings (really wall reliefs) are better. In these works Ms. Harnischfeger coaxes complex topographies from stacks of colored paper entombed in plaster. In some passages the papers have been fanned out to produce a stepped pattern; in others the edges of stacked sheets read as paintbrush streaks. The best are two untitled works in which green calcite and crushed glass add to an already rich textural mix.

The skillful way Ms. Harnischfeger manipulates hard and soft, rough and smooth materials brings to mind the game of rock, paper, scissors: no single strategy or substance prevails.

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