

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 2006

## Art in Review

### David Dupuis Jessica Jackson Hutchins

Derek Eller  
615 West 27th Street, Chelsea  
Through March 11

Despite the current and largely trumped-up backlash against small, exquisitely made drawings, David Dupuis continues to develop as one of the moment's leading Surrealist-Symbolists. His concentrated visionary landscapes combine gnarled graphite shapes and incidents done in vivid colored pencil (mostly blue) with surgically imposed collage, mostly of levitating eyes.

In some of the best new works — “Visions of the Potter’s Ground” and “Beachwood Canyon” — Mr. Dupuis allows his color to run amok, creating wild patchworks of color that contrast with his more precise renderings. Death and the body have become frequent themes, most spectacularly in three large, harrowing self-portraits. “Self-Portrait 1” combines some of the artist’s signatory decorative forms with hyper-real depictions of disease overtaking his torso and especially his face, darkly furious and riddled with tumors. In this surprising turn, Mr. Dupuis finds a new object for his astounding draftsman skills, suddenly aligning his art with that of Otto Dix by directing his visionary sensibility to something disturbingly real.

In the gallery’s project room, Jessica Jackson Hutchins’s “Relics From a Lonely Dinner Party” provides something akin to comic relief. This series of ceramic sculptures consists mostly of small, crudely made vessels — Japanese tea bowls, perhaps — perched precariously on extravagant pedestals that suggest little hillocks, mountainous crags and, in one case, a Chinese scholar’s rock. Two ovoid pieces without pedestals may make loose reference to blue-and-white porcelain.

The works’ titles can mock the ceremonial functions of ceramic vessels with dark humor, as in “Funeral Ham Platter on a Stone Path,” and you sense a general disdain for the medium’s usual standards of skill and finish. Whatever. These efforts constitute a marked improvement over the papier-mâché that Ms. Hutchins favored in her solo debut at this gallery in 2004.

ROBERTA SMITH