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Walter Redinger / Banks Violette
Mitchell Albus Gallery, 511 West 25th
Street, Chelsea

Mitchell Albus, always up to something interesting, pairs artists of different generations and, one would have thought, different sensibilities, in this show, and makes them make sense together.

The Canadian sculptor Walter Redinger, 65, gained notice some decades ago for his sleek biomorphic fiberglass pieces inflected by Pop and Surrealism. The New York-based Banks Violette, in his early 30's, is known for all-black sculptures, also of fiberglass, that refer to a death-fixated youth culture inspired by certain forms of pop music.

In this show, Mr. Redinger is the heavy, with an amazing all-black 1969 sculpture around which everything else resolves. Torpedo-shaped and horizontal, it's like a hunkered-down phallic idol, surrounded in this case by a series of smaller upright pieces titled "The God Seekers" (2004), totems of some unnamed cult.

Mr. Violette's contribution is contrastingly subtle and light. Two sculptures placed in corners of the gallery are based on the forms of amplifiers used by heavy-metal bands but are coated with white salt as if



God Seekers, Walter Redinger



Left (drawing on black wall) Banks Violette.
Right (white wall relief sculpture) Walter Redinger

but are coated with white salt, as if their sound had crystallized. A circular black-and-white wall painting could be a kind of abstract mandala, but is actually the logo for the motel chain Comfort Inns, where traveling Americans stop, sleep or whatever. Both artists gain from their shared company. Mr. Redinger's work, which can look merely zany, reveals unsuspected weight, depth and contemporary relevance. And Mr. Violette, an accomplished young artist of serious promise, moves beyond the youth-cult images he is associated with toward some further dimension of the nihilist sublime. Where he is going exactly, we don't know. But that we look forward to finding out is a measure of the success of the show.

- Holland Cotter

courtesy of The New York Times



Bottom (black fibreglass sculpture on base) Walter Redinger.
Top (black painting and left and right speakers) Banks Violette.

(photos by Mitchell Albus, were not shown with The New York Times publication)