

# Visual Arts

BY RICHARD SPEER

rspeer@week.com

Angels' wings, Phishhead roosters and naked-woman toothbrushes in the Pearl.

## First Thursday Impressions

REVIEW

### ALYSIA DUCKLER

Heidi L. Kirkpatrick's works, Lisa Elorriaga Cysz's works. 1236 NW Hoyt St., 223-7595. Closes May 29.

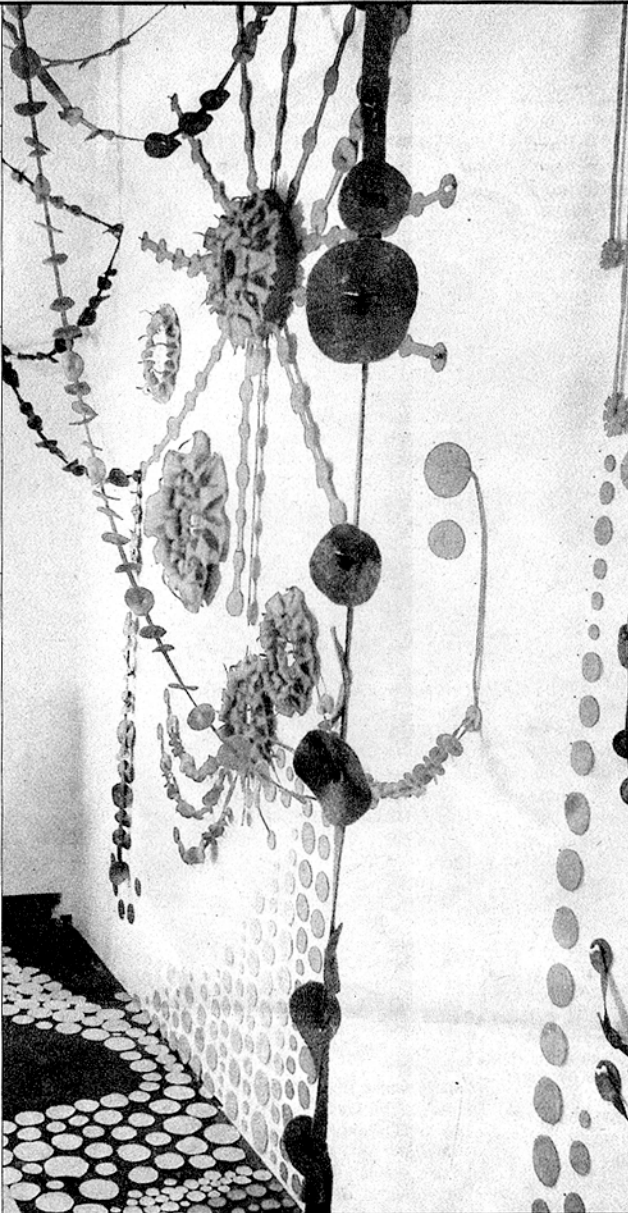
**BLUE SKY** Keizo Kitajima's photographs. 1231 NW Hoyt St., 225-0210. Closes May 29.

**PULLIAM DEFFENBAUGH** James Boulton's paintings, Ana Fidler's works on paper and installation. 522 NW 12th Ave., 228-6665. Closes May 29.

**WATERSTONE** Nancy Arko's works. 424 NW 12th Ave., 226-6196. Closes May 30.

Beware if you have a sensitive gag reflex: Lisa Elorriaga Cysz's cloying paintings of angels and fairies at **Alysia Duckler** skirt dangerously close to Lawrence Gallery-level hokum, especially the giant, mixed-media angel's wings, which one wishes would take flight and wing their way out of the gallery—and Portland—forever. Heidi L. Kirkpatrick's show in the back of the gallery, however, provides a much-needed counterbalance of subtlety and conceptual rigor.

Kirkpatrick's post-feminist critique, *Girly*, takes aim at an old dog—the objectification of women—with some new bullets. She photographs antique objects—a toothbrush shaped like a naked woman, a knife adorned with a picture of Marilyn Monroe's *Playboy* centerfold, a salt shaker in the shape of a buxom blonde—and presents them in a curio cabinet, the photos on black mattes floating above a deep-set plane, scribbled over with cryptic, autobiographical confessions. There's no subtlety to the objects themselves, but the artist's treatment of them affords an ambiguity that eschews heavy-handed



sermonizing. We're left to ask ourselves whether these relics are cute, funny or chilling, and to what degree they hold relevance today. The show is similar to, although more sophisticatedly presented than, damali ayo's *playback* last September at Mark Woolley, in which ayo used goli

wog dolls to critique African-American stereotypes.

Anna Fidler's works on paper at **Pulliam Deffenbaugh** have evolved little since her last outing at the gallery, but her free-wheeling installation piece, *Tropicana*, points to a dynamic new direction. With its felt forms strung together, dotting the

Anna Fidler's installation piece *Tropicana* at Pulliam Deffenbaugh

floor and climbing the walls, the work recalls Pop designer Verner Panton's eccentric textural environments and signals a welcome step into the third dimension.

At **Blue Sky**, Keizo Kitajima provides the latest installment in the gallery's formulaic program of sterile cityscapes from the exotic nation *du jour*. Mercifully, his white-background portraits of people with minutely varied hairstyles display a Richard Avedonian finesse that relieves the tedium.

Down at **Street Walk** on Northwest 13th Avenue between Irving and Hoyt streets, Thomas Taylor hawks his acrylic paintings, which vary wildly in style and quality but show promise. His naive figurative works—including a man atop a horse and an unfortunate black-light rooster painting—might appeal to Phishheads after a few bong hits, but his drip-based abstractions are in a higher league. While Taylor should cease and desist his more blatant Jackson Pollock ripoffs, he shines when he employs the drip in concert with free-form improvisations like *Solar Vortex*, which derives its luxuriant texture from Taylor's dragging a screwdriver through thick, wet paint. It will be interesting to see how sharply the artist focuses for his one-person show next month at Dieterle Gallery in Everett Station.

Finally, at **Waterstone**, Nancy Arko shows her knack for gestural abstraction, but her landscapes of grassy fields suffer from an unpalatable, '80s-era color palette. More egregiously, her collages prove that artists, for the love of God, must never, ever, again use sheets of music in a collage. A new rule: Any artist caught doing this will get a weeklong, expenses-paid stay in the Abu Ghraib prison, under the hospitality of our fine young men and women in uniform. **W**