

Naves, Mario. "Chop Shop," *The New York Observer*, 19 July 2004, 18

CHOP SHOP

How much you like *Woodwork*, a group exhibition of 22 artists at Anthony Grant, Inc., depends on how much you like wood. Material matters here: craft less so—this is a show that concerns itself with the *what* of art more than with the *why* or *how*.

The results are what you might expect: Any show that includes works like Sherrie Levine's dull, theory-driven constructions, Ann Truitt's elegiac concentrations of form and Leonardo Drew's maudlin accumulations of detritus is, by definition, a mixed bag. Still, wood does the trick as a unifying conceit, making for odd or funny juxtapositions of temperament and style.

The sculptor Michael Beatty creates an elegant, if somewhat predictable, tension by contrasting the organic (wood) and the industrial (steel) with *Untitled (Double Loop)* (2003). An early landscape by Claes Oldenburg, assembled from oddments of discarded furniture, is dry, droll and picturesque. Richard Artschwager's "confessional-shaped" crate is a nicely underplayed Dadaist joke, as is, to a lesser extent, George Stoll's yellow car sponge. Ellsworth Kelly lets the grain of an immaculate plinth cut from oak express the sensuality he's ever intent on suppressing.

Watering Hole (2002), a kid-friendly biomorphic sculpture by Bruce Brosnan, is the most winning piece in the show. By making a work that sticks out from the wall, the perpetually promising Mr. Brosnan begins to admit that sculpture, before it does anything else, must acknowledge and engage actual space. An obvious lesson for a sculptor, but consider it one small step for humankind, one important step for this young artist.

Woodwork is at Anthony Grant, Inc., 37 West 57th Street, until Aug. 27.