

based on ubiquitous industrial security netting, is in some works fully visible, while in others it is only partially discernible beneath semi-transparent strokes of paint. Infused with light, space and air, the painted sections bring to mind bodies of water, misty skies or shadowy distances with affinities to Rothko's floating rectangles of atmospheric color. Over, through and beneath these windowpane structures and painted grounds move lines of various thickness and color, by turns graceful, skit-tish, languorous and tentative.

In the bottom half of *Lake Fishing* (2005), for example, blurred lines hover just below the thinly layered paint strokes, evoking movement, a palimpsest, or a vague reminiscence. Sitting on top of the painted and gridded surface, meanwhile, there is an open, static linear armature in hues of red and black, which seems to jump out beyond the more fluid graphic activity taking place in multiple planes behind. In all the paintings and drawings, Moore deftly composes and choreographs a spectrum of visual scores, the lines at once insistently physical and hauntingly chimerical. As abstract visual compositions and as vehicles for phenomenological contemplation, Moore's canvases and drawings are the real deal.

—Susan Harris

## Roy DeForest at George Adams

Within a few years of joining Robert Arneson, William T. Wiley, Wayne Thiebaud and others at UC Davis in the mid-1960s, Roy DeForest developed his signature contribution to that amazingly fertile milieu. To his pictures of wild-eyed hounds, horses, birds and humans wandering a dense, primitive dreamscape that may be Northern California, he brought the accessibility and demystification of the art-making process that is central to Pop. But he stuck with another sort of mystification: the cult of the artist's personality. In DeForest's version of Bay Area eccentricity, delight in color, surface and pattern is as palpable as Matisse's, and time has not mellowed the willful ham-handedness of his painterly attack.

DeForest's first solo show since 1997 included eight paintings in acrylic on canvas, all about 5 feet to a side and completed in 2005. Several feature a central personage attended by ancillary

sidekicks, co-conspirators and alter egos. *A Country Life* evokes the tradition of the commemorative portrait; a robust blond farmer or cowboy, in his Sunday best, is surrounded by medallionlike portraits of horses, cattle, poultry, perhaps family members and numerous garrulous hounds. They are shown against a backdrop of loose grids suggesting cultivated fields or gardens. *Present Company* presents its cast of big-nosed folks, dogs and birds in four distinct strata. Spiked dots applied directly from a tube of paint cover the faces of many characters, connoting not a skin condition but a more general malaise. Elsewhere, blunt squirts of paint vie with passages of surprising delicacy, as in the sly, nasty bunnies in *Song of the Blackbird*.

As in some pre-Renaissance painting, the relative sizes of the players might imply narrative hierarchy, but among the most pungent portraits are the smallest, like the demented, apple-red pup who reigns mascotlike at the top center of *The Saga of the Shepard Brothers*. Almost everyone appears a little uneasy in these paintings, uptight but zoned-out. The lounging avians in *The Birdwatcher* are oblivious to the blank-eyed, daydreaming humans below, whose reveries

seem to include an anxious hound and a bristling baboon. All four fellows have funny hats and noses; one has infiltrated the birds' treetop domain with the aid of a beak disguise. The painting suggests a symbolic approach to color, with earthy colors at bottom giving way to a bejeweled, heavily ornamented sky in tropical hues.

Reminders of DeForest's contribution to the rich tradition of California assemblage, his paintings' custom-built frames feature yet more funk, like the

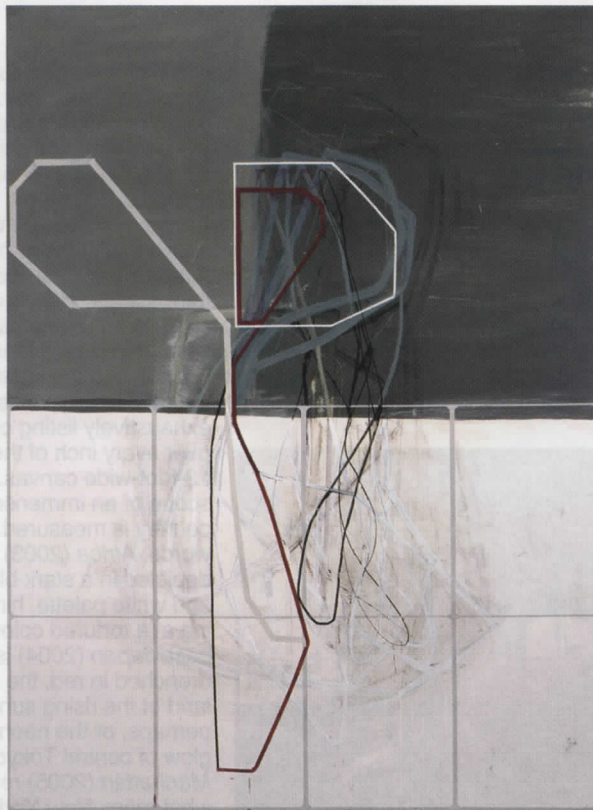
heads attached to *North of Patagonia*, some of which might be the thought bubbles of others. Among these somnambulant, sightless (or all-seeing) zombies is the show's most motivated character, a red-nosed hooligan with a brush cut and his "game face" on. Scabrous paint, like mishandled grout in candy colors, yields, in this atypically sweeping canvas, to a radiant, palm-flecked hillside.

—Stephen Maine

## Mel Leipzig at Gallery Henoch

Mel Leipzig is today what he set out to be 40 years ago: a committed realist, honest in his approach to portraiture. His practice is rooted in the ordinary claims of everyday life. Before 1995 most of his models were family, students and friends, whom he depicted in environments specific to their identities. Since then Leipzig has broadened his focus to portrayals of artists. He routinely compensates those who pose for him for their time and for the use of their space. Working from life in acrylics on canvas, without recourse to photography but with the aid of a penciled grid, he limns the figure and then releases his models as he turns to the setting.

Leipzig once restricted his palette to eight or so colors, but since 1990 he has further limited his basic palette to dark crimson, dark blue, yellow and white. The score of paintings included in this survey date from 1991 on, beginning with portraits of his teenage children in their evocative clutter at home. The 5-by-5½-foot *Francesca's Room* (1991) finds his daughter



Gordon Moore: *The Emerald Fly Cast (for Harvey Quaytman)*, 2005, water-based paints and pumice on canvas, 90 by 66 inches; at Betty Cuningham.

Roy DeForest: *Saga of the Shepard Brothers*, 2005, acrylic on canvas, 64 by 60 inches; at George Adams.

