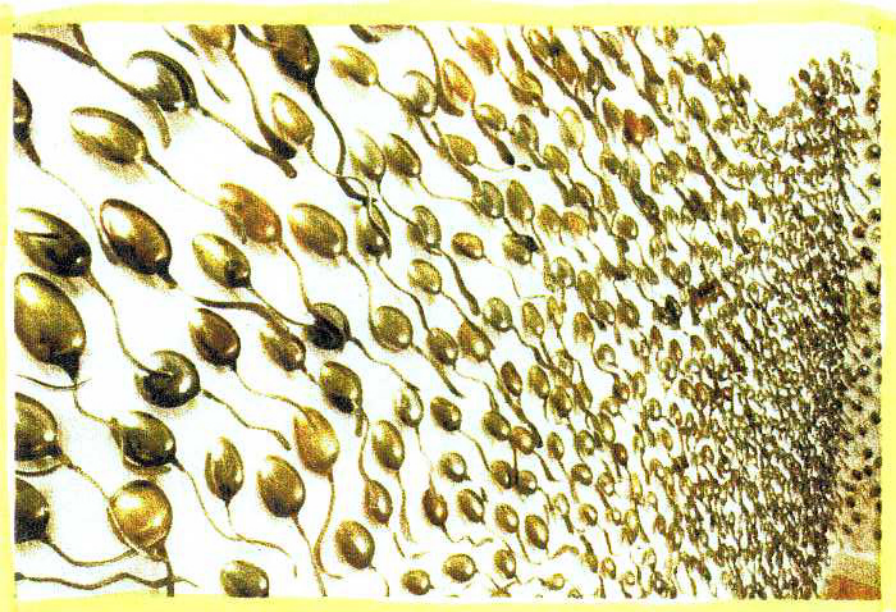


ART REVIEW

Transforming Life's Debris



By WILLIAM ZIMMER

THE BRONX

"Reduce/Reuse/Re-examine" at Gylndor Gallery at Wave Hill is essentially a show about recycling, but most pieces in it don't seem especially civic-minded despite the political-sounding title. Differing from traditional Dada, the concentration is on the found object as revered and transformed.

This show is especially elegant. The gallery here is a former mansion and so it has refined touches like a staircase with an elegant curve, which the artist Tamiko Kawata has mimicked in her piece, a sculptural installation, using toilet paper rolls donated to her by New York City hotels. The piece, "Toward the Light" — a staircase near a window whose translucent curtain is made of toilet paper — itself isn't especially lovely, but the engineering that went into realizing it is impressive.

"Sperm Spoons," a second more angular staircase, by Eung Ho Park, is lined with metal spoons with handles bent into waves. It is an audacious work, with the myriad spoons racing up the wall providing a succinct statement about birth, or rebirth, giving an old object fresh character. The stair works of Ms. Kawata and Mr. Park are both visible instances of obsession.

Sarah Hollis Perry's piece, "At Home" is reflective of a cozy life: It's a fat armchair and ottoman covered in blue plastic tufts. The plastic comes from the bags in which The New York Times is delivered to homes. One can imagine the artist afloat in her sea of blue while keeping up with the world.

Elizabeth Duffy also transforms a product that has New York City written on it. She has turned several Chase Bank envelopes, the kind with address windows, inside-out revealing a blue patterning that is soberly floral. They are on the wall and, because of the windows, resemble city buildings. But Ms. Duffy is inspired by the patterned lining to draw fat flowers serendipitously over the envelopes and onto the wall, thus declaring herself a free spirit in a regulated environment.

Trash as we know it, various and scattered about, makes an appearance in "Ground Springs III" by Judy Hoffman. It's a large, basket-like concoction of natural materials and the debris that is often found in and around them. It reflects a common situation, but Ms. Hoffman has formalized her materials, taking them from a variety of places, so that the industrial objects seem intriguing rather than eyesores.

The largest display of industrial debris is Steve Bradley's "Devalue/Revalue," in which cleaned-up trash threatens to overwhelm the room it's in. A long curved vessel, filled with cans, bottles and the like emerges from a fireplace like a blaring trumpet. The material in Mr. Bradley's work achieves no transformation. It is what it is, but his piece also includes a revolving rack with little objects that are for sale. If an item has some personal touch, it costs more. Mr. Bradley enlisted a crew of Bronx schoolchildren to help him gather his material.

Paul Rutkovsky, who has made a sport jacket out of trash, which he calls "cultural residue," also displays his meticulous daily journal that records not only what he gathers but also what he eats. These instances remind



Works in the exhibit "Reduce/Reuse/Re-examine" at Wave Hill include "Sperm Spoons," left, by Eung Ho Park; "At Home," top right, by Sarah Hollis Perry; "Garbage Jacket," right, by Paul Rutkovsky; and "Recollection," below, by Peggy Diggs.



recycling. The common term is, after all, trash collecting.

A very satisfying and complex demonstration of obsession is "Recollection" by Peggy Diggs. The title has a rich double meaning. From her own collections, she has gathered many diverse items, which stimulated her thoughts and memory. Each item is in a glass jar and the jars cover three tables. The result is a narrative in that the audience is invited to handle the jars and rearrange them. A jar containing a crumpled-up note that Ms. Diggs wrote to a boy in grade school might find itself next to some hospital item used on her dying father. This piece is expansive, challenging the viewer's own recollections.

Most of the works in the exhibition are recent, so Justen Ladda's "Plastic Pan," a portrait bust of the impish Greek god Pan, from 1990 stands out as some sort of antique. Mr. Ladda gives him a green face, but what is especially interesting to contemporary views is how the fairly recent past is full of outdated objects. The base of the statue is composed of passé objects like boxes for 35-



labels on plastic bottles identify products no longer made. The viewer's recollections are once again stimulated.

The 15 artists (there is one team of 3) in the show are not youngsters. Most were born in the 1930's, 40's or 50's. The most recent birth date is 1962. It doesn't seem likely that an artist would come to recycling art late in life, and what makes this exhibition vital is the sense that the participants were always in the rhythm.

"Reduce/Reuse/Re-examine" is at the Gylndor Gallery at Wave Hill through May 31. Information-