

ART REVIEWS

Abstract Works from Moira Dryer

By KRISTINE MCKENNA
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

An artifact is a memory in the form of an object; when New York abstractionist Moira Dryer describes her paintings as artifacts, one assumes she is alluding to the memory bank of art history. Her work—a post-modern form of field painting that owes a major debt to Clyfford Still and Ross Bleckner—manages to invoke several disparate chunks of the past.

Various forms of representational art, including landscape and still life, are swirling in the mist generated by these florid-colored canvases, and they also incorporate aspects of '60s stripe painting, Surrealism, Conceptualism, and sculpture. Several of the canvases on view at the Fred Hoffman Gallery in Santa Monica are embellished with hardware (grommets and screws) or cut-out shapes that transform them from paintings into objects. Those extra little flourishes also serve to invest Dryer's work with a mannered self-consciousness that allows it to be read as a comical updating of geometric abstraction.

One canvas appears to be riddled with bullet holes, while another is defaced with large, lurid green splotches. They're very flashy paintings, eager to be pretty, amusing and smart. Dryer claims to be interested in what she describes as "emotional presence" rather than theory, and that's readily apparent in her work. While firmly grounded in academic thought, these are highly sensual paintings engaged in an intense flirtation with the idea of chaos.

Also on view are four large works by Ellsworth Kelly that span 23 years in the career of this seminal hard-edge abstractionist. A pioneer in the use of shaped



Donald Baechler's "Scarab" is on view at Corcoran Gallery.

canvases and flat uninflated color, Kelly hasn't changed much over the course of 35 years of exhibiting, if this selection of work is an accurate reflection of his evolution. A 1965 work isn't noticeably different from a piece from 1988; both are rigorously formal yet rapturously lush.

■ *Fred Hoffman: 912 Colorado Blvd., Santa Monica; to April 20; (213) 394-4199. Closed Sundays and Mondays.*

Resurrected Kitsch: An exhibition of paintings by New York artist Donald Baechler, on view at the James Corcoran Gallery in Santa Monica, could be described as a meditation on lost innocence. Employing crude symbols and motifs associated with Outsider art (a term referring to folk art, the art of the insane, and children's art), Baechler paints in a labored, amateurish way. These big, goofy renderings of beach balls and quaint Dutch boys in traditional garb feel leaden. They flaunt their confusion

openly and you can feel the artist struggling to "draw correctly," even as you sense that Baechler's work grows out of a sophisticated sensibility acutely aware that "drawing correctly" simply isn't enough these days.

Exiled from an ordered universe where things are as they appear to be, Baechler's work struggles to empower kitsch imagery that's been drained of meaning through overuse. There's a touching quality of defeat and desperation to the futile campaign waged by these curious paintings, and you find yourself empathizing with them despite the fact that they're painful to look at.

■ *James Corcoran Gallery: 1327 5th St., Santa Monica; to April 20; (213) 451-4666. Closed Sundays and Mondays.*

American Mystic: In the tradition of America's visionary nature painters Albert Pinkham Ryder, Marsden Hartley and Arthur Dove, New York artist Bill Jensen's watercolors, on view at the Margo Leavin Gallery in Hollywood, espouse a mystical view of the universe. Presently at mid-career, Jensen was raised in the Midwest and his abstracted landscapes combine an unbridled love of the vast, undulating American plains with a solemn reverence for work by the pioneers of American modernism.

Jensen has a rather eccentric sense of composition and he tends to cram the picture plane with bulging forms. There is a ripe, sexual subtext to these turbulent, crowded images and Jensen has a beautifully rhythmic way of navigating hairpin turns in paint.

■ *Margo Leavin Gallery: 812 N. Robertson Blvd., Hollywood; to April 27; (213)-273-0603. Closed Sundays and Mondays.*

General Cinema

WESTWOOD

SAME DAY ADVANCE TICKETS
AVCO CINEMA
Wilshire Blvd.
1 Blk. E. of Westwood
213/475-0711

THX Dolby Stereo
THE HARD WAY (R)
12:00-2:30-5:10
7:40-10:15

Dolby Stereo
HOME ALONE (PG)
12:30-2:50-5:10-7:30-9:50

Dolby Stereo/Julia Roberts
SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY (R)
12:15-2:45-5:00-7:30-10:00

BEVERLY HILLS

SAME DAY ADVANCE TICKETS
BEVERLY CONNECTION
La Cienega at Beverly Blvd.
213/659-5911
Free 2½ Hours
Validated Parking

SR Stereo
THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (R)
12:15-2:50-5:25-8:00-10:25

THX Dolby Stereo/Kim Basinger
THE MARRYING MAN (R)
11:40-2:20-5:00-7:40-10:15
Fri./Sat. Late Show: 12:45 a.m.

THX Dolby Stereo/Albert Brooks
DEFENDING YOUR LIFE (R)
11:30-2:10-4:50-7:30-10:10
Fri./Sat. Late Show: 12:40 a.m.

THX Dolby Stereo/Gene Hackman
CLASS ACTION (R)
12:00-2:30-5:00-7:30-10:00

Best Actor/Jeremy Irons
REVERSAL OF FORTUNE (R)
1:30-4:30-7:15-9:45

Stereo/Jennifer Connelly
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES (PG-13)
1:45-3:45-5:45-7:45-9:45
Fri./Sat. Late Show: 11:45 p.m.

SHERMAN OAKS

CINEMA
So. of Vent. Hwy.
Van Nuys Blvd.
818/986-9660

THX Dolby Stereo
THE MARRYING MAN (R)
12:30-3:00-5:30-8:00-10:30

Dolby Stereo/Ernie Reyes, Jr.
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
12:40-3:00-5:15-7:30-10:45

Robert DeNiro/Annette Bening
GUILTY BY SUSPICION (PG-13)
12:30-3:00-5:30-8:00-10:25

Julia Roberts
SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY (R)
1:00-3:15-5:30-7:45-10:15

amc

WOODLAND HILLS

CINEMA
Victory Blvd.
1 Blk. W. Canoga
818/703-7571

Dolby Stereo
HOME ALONE (PG)
12:45-3:00-5:15
7:30-9:45

SHIPWRECKED (PG) 12:15/Sep. Adm.
MR. & MRS. BRIDGE (PG-13) 2:25-7:00
THE GRIFTERS (R) 4:45-9:45

KING RALPH (PG) 12:30-5:00-9:30
L.A. STORY (PG-13) 2:45-7:15
Fri./Sat. Sep. Adm.: **ROCKY HORROR (R)**

SAME DAY ADVANCE TICKETS
FALLBROOK
Fallbrook Mall
Fallbrook & Vanowen
818/347-6091

Stereo/**SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY (R)**
12:00-2:30-5:00-7:30-10:00

Dolby Stereo/Ernie Reyes, Jr.
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
11:45-2:00-4:15-7:00-9:15

THX Dolby Stereo/Alec Baldwin
THE MARRYING MAN (R)
12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:15

Best Actress/Kathy Bates
MISERY (R) 11:15-3:15-7:30
IF LOOKS COULD KILL (PG-13) 1:30-5:30-9:45

THX Dolby Stereo/Gene Hackman
CLASS ACTION (R)
11:30-2:00-4:30-7:15-10:00

Dolby Stereo/Robert DeNiro
GUILTY BY SUSPICION (PG-13)
12:00-2:30-5:00-7:30-10:00

Dolby Stereo/Paige Turco
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
11:00-1:15-3:30-5:30-7:45-10:00

Dolby Stereo/Paige Turco
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
12:30-2:40-4:50-7:00-9:10

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
1:30-3:40-5:50/Sep. Adm.
GUILTY BY SUSPICION (PG-13) 8:00-10:10

Frank Whaley/Dermot Mulroney
FASHION CTR
Tampa/Nordhoff
818/993-0111

Paige Turco
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
11:30-1:30-3:30-5:30-7:30-9:30

Winner, 7 Academy Awards
Dolby/**DANCES WITH WOLVES (PG-13)**
12:30-4:30-8:30

Macaulay Culkin
HOME ALONE (PG)
12:00-2:15-4:30-7:00-9:30

NORTHRIDGE
Val Kilmer/**THE DOORS (R)** 4:30-9:50
Fri./Sat. Sep. Adm.: **ROCKY HORROR (R)**

BARGAIN MATINEES \$3.75
MON-FRI ALL SHOWS STARTING BEFORE 6 PM*
SAT SUN & HOLIDAYS 1st MATINEE ONLY
* AVCO 1st MATINEE ONLY - EVERY DAY

ARCADIA

SANTA ANITA
135 Fashion Park
818/445-6200
12:45-3:00-5:15-7:30-9:45

HOME ALONE (PG)
12:00-2:30-5:00/Sep. Adm.
THE HARD WAY (R) 7:30-10:00

Dolby Stereo/Jennifer Connelly
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES (PG-13)
1:30-3:35-5:40-7:45-9:50

Julia Roberts/Kevin Anderson
SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY (R)
1:00-3:15-5:30-7:45-10:00

Sissy Spacek/Whoopi Goldberg
THE LONG WALK HOME (PG)
12:30-2:45-5:00-7:15-9:30

SAME DAY ADVANCE TICKETS
Bargain Matinee \$3.50 Today Until 6 pm
RANCHO
I-215 at Mt.
Vernon S. at 10-10
714/370-2085
Dolby Stereo
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
12:00-2:05-4:10-6:15-8:20

Dolby Stereo/Ernie Reyes, Jr.
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II (PG)
1:00-3:05-5:10-7:15-9:20

Julia Roberts/Patrick Bergin
SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY (R)
1:00-3:15-5:30-7:45-10:00

Macaulay Culkin/Catherine O'Hara
John Hughes/**HOME ALONE (PG)**
12:00-2:20-4:40-7:00-9:20

Best Actor/**REVERSAL OF FORTUNE (R)**
12:00-4:00-8:05
Best Actress/**MISERY (R)**
2:05-6:05-10:15

Gene Hackman
CLASS ACTION (R)
12:05-2:30-4:55-7:20-9:45

TODAY'S SHOWTIMES

Celebrating Judith Baca's Vision for the 'World'

■ **Art:** The muralist hopes to create a monument to peace with 'World Wall.' Parts of the huge work will be on view this weekend at Lincoln Park.

By SHAUNA SNOW
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Historically, artists have been thought of as the visionaries," says Judith F. Baca, a leading Chicana artist whose vision has created such monumental results as the half-mile-long "Great Wall of Los Angeles" mural painted along the Tujunga Wash during the past 10 years by Baca and hundreds of teens.

Among her other accomplishments are Los Angeles' first city-wide mural project, which has produced more than 250 works over 10 years, and the 3-year-old "Neighborhood Pride: Great Walls Unlimited" program, which has commissioned 36 additional murals thus far.

Baca's latest goal makes her past achievements pale by comparison: She hopes to create an international vision of peace—a concept which she describes as "an active vision, in which negotiating toward peace would be as exciting to younger generations as video games . . . which now focus on destruction and war."

Toward that end, Baca has conceived "World Wall: A Vision of the Future Without Fear," an evolving, 210-foot portable mural that will be seen in South Africa, Mexico, Japan and Spain (coinciding with the 1992 Olympics) and four other countries. The mural has already been seen in Finland and the Soviet Union, and begins a three-month stint at Washington's Smithsonian Institution in July.

Eventually, the mural will have 14 10x30-foot panels, seven of which will be painted by Baca and

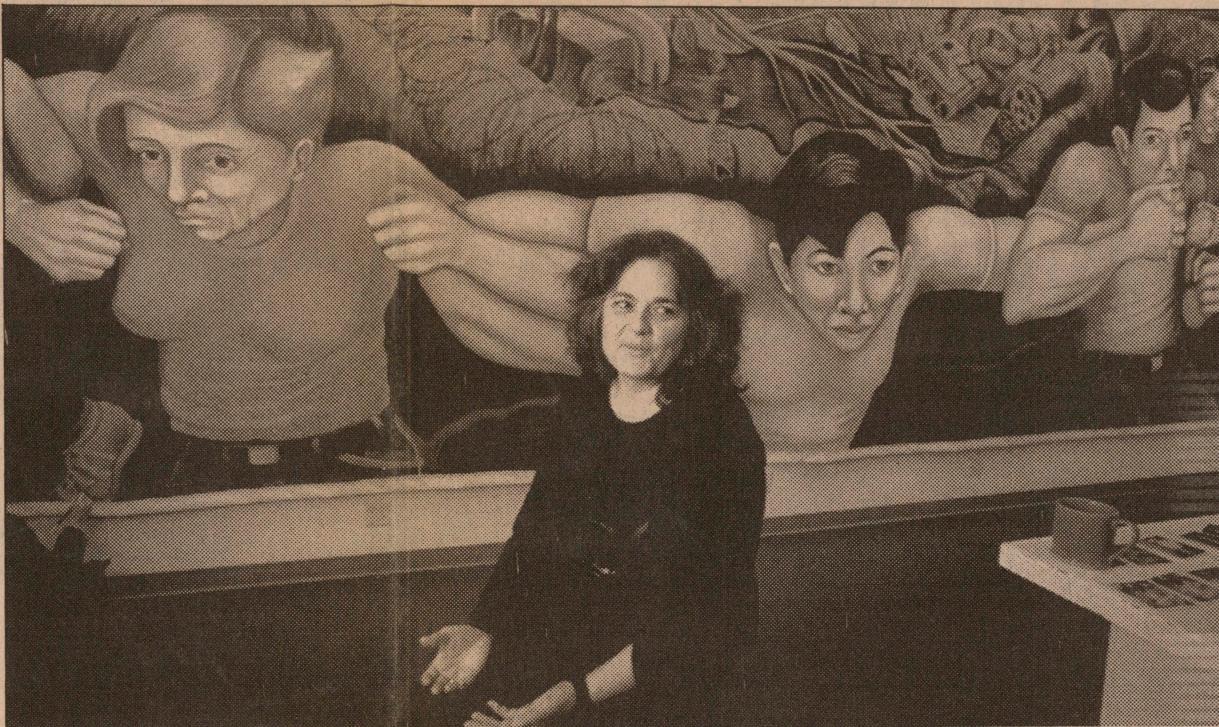
arranged in a semicircle 100-feet in diameter. Hung along the outside of the semicircle will be seven additional panels—painted by artists from each of the countries toured by the mural.

L.A. audiences will get what may be their only chance to view the work during a brief showing this weekend at Lincoln Park's Plaza de la Raza. But local audiences will see only the seven completed panels—five by Baca, the other two by artists from Finland and the Soviet Union.

"The 'World Wall' is taking what I have learned in the neighborhoods of Los Angeles on an international level," said Baca, noting that this concept actually grew out of her "Great Wall" project, which she credits with teaching L.A. history to countless teens.

Kids learn faster through the murals than they do through textbooks," Baca said. "And what we hope they learn through the 'World Wall' is to envision a future without fear."

Baca, 44, who painted her first public murals at Hollenbeck Park in 1971, said she hoped her peace idea would spread in the same way the mural movement grew in Los Angeles. "In 1969 and '70, there were no murals in Los Angeles," she said. "Then the movement started in East Los Angeles with the Hispanic community there, and now, we're definitely the international seat of the mural movement. . . . I think the 'World Wall' is going to do the same thing—create the first of a series of global collaborative projects just like the murals of East L.A. set in motion murals springing up around the



ROBERT DURRELL / Los Angeles Times

whole city, the whole country and the world. The envisioning of hope has been a practice for many artists, and now we want to bring that vision to the world."

For those who miss the "World Wall" this weekend, Baca says she would like to "bring it home to its origin once it's complete" in about 1995. Her hopes for funding such a viewing are slim, however.

"It's ironic that I've gotten more support on an international level than a local level," Baca said, noting that other countries have sponsored visits to their cities and provided free accommodations to Baca and her assistants, but locally, she has been turned down by several foundations and councils including the Getty Trust Fund for the Visual Arts, the Lannan Foundation and the James Irvine Foundation.

Baca first conceived of the "World Wall" in 1986 through

funding from the U.S. Department of Education and organizers of "The Great Peace March," which was to have taken 1,400 people on a 255-day trek from Los Angeles to Washington in pursuit of bilateral nuclear disarmament. But when that movement began to fizzle, production on the mural stalled. However, additional funding from groups such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Women's Foundation and Arco was later found. Production resumed and Baca left for Joensuu, Finland, with 4½ completed panels last summer. She then took the project to Moscow's Gorky Park, where it was seen by an estimated 150,000 Soviets.

In conceiving the "World Wall" Baca brought together an international team of 45 students and artists who defined peace simply as "balance," which became the name of the central panel. In it, Baca illustrates the concept through Hopi- and Eastern-influenced depic-

Artist Judith Baca, in her studio, before a panel from her collaborative mural project, which is titled "World Wall: A Vision of the Future Without Fear," says it's "ironic that I've gotten more support on an international level than a local level."

tions balancing the sun and the moon, the land and the sea, and man and woman. Eventually, "Balance" will be flanked on the left by three panels illustrating the spiritual or individual means to achieving peace, and on the right by three panels outlining material and economic means to peace.

"As artists, we have the power of spreading ideas, and this is a way in which the power of ideas can move around the world," said Baca, who was a founder of Venice's Social and Public Art Resource Center in 1976. "The chain is beginning, we're forming links between the world through artists. We're putting our visionary position to work."

■ "World Wall: A Vision of the Future Without Fear," at Plaza de la Raza, 3540 N. Mission Road, Lincoln Park, (213) 223-2475. Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.