

EDWARD THORP GALLERY
Press Release



This Way, That Way
By Mario Naves

As its title and spelling pretty much indicate, *everywhichway*, a group show at Edward Thorp Gallery, is more typical of summer gallery fare than Soutine and Modern Art. The Thorp exhibition doesn't have posterity or scholarly focus in mind. A miscellany of talent provides reason enough to throw some paintings up, kick back, crank the A/C and enjoy the languorous season.

Would that Thorp kicked back more often. Commercial galleries use the slow time of year to audition artists for possible representation or to do favors for friends. Whatever occasioned the easygoing tenor, the gallery should tap into it more often: *everywhichway* is the most interesting show Thorp has mounted this season. Why aren't these seven "under-known" artists considered worthy of prime time?

Despite their stylistic diversity, their art coheres in unpredictable and sometimes weird ways. The secretive dialogue that occurs between the paintings of Colin Thomson and the ceramic wall pieces of Joyce Robins is a case in point: They share a constant in form—the circle—and an interest in meditative rhythms, yet Mr. Thomson and Ms. Robins explore different tangents. Mr. Thomson looks to mid-century design to create brashly

patterned abstractions; they mirror and then still the shifting tumult of images emblematic of our virtual age. Ms. Robins' ceramic reliefs, with their crackled patinas and accumulations of punctures, take less from culture than nature: Each piece seems a meditation—a requiem—for the fleeting and fragile sensuality of the body.

Some artists benefit from being alone. The peculiar paintings of Katherine Bradford and Jennifer Riley are wisely cordoned off in their own spaces. Ms. Bradford's luridly colored pictures of battleships are a pseudo-naïve version of history painting that is more quizzical than whimsical. Ms. Riley's clean, clinical systematic abstractions bracingly swallow the space around them.

Against the odds, the main gallery manages an equilibrium between artists of stubbornly individual, all-but-impenetrable purpose. It's certainly hard to tell what Sigrid Sandström is up to: Her theatrical paintings are an uncertain, if smartly crafted, jumble of gestural brushstrokes and northern landscape painting, ironic commentary and sublime associations. Harvey Tulcensky makes obsession work for him in a suite of meticulously constructed drawings of tightly meshed linear networks. And Chris Martin's tendency to overestimate his every move indulges a necessary chutzpah in his bluntly fashioned iconic abstractions. Bright colors, big forms, unapologetic surfaces and more glitter than any artist should be allowed to sprinkle deliver a punchy counterpoint to a diverting smorgasbord of art.

Everywhichway is at Edward Thorp Gallery, 210 11th Avenue, until July 28.