

ArtPreview, 20-27.07.2005

„Neil Gall - Hales Gallery East End“

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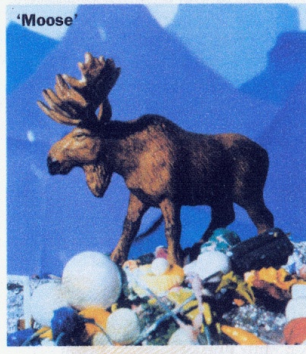
ART PREVIEW

Neil Gall Hales Gallery *East End*

There is often a whiff of sadism about photorealist painting and Neil Gall openly uses the canvas as a dissecting slab, each image operating as a visual post-mortem on the creative act. His Jekyll-and-Hyde approach begins with the creation of mini sculptural worlds that are thrown, stuck and stapled together with childlike abandon from a variety of art materials, household products and assorted junk. He then painstakingly recreates on canvas these curious art dioramas-cum-still lifes.

The crisp, clinical environment of the gallery makes the perfect setting for his very busy but often sickly sweet works. Standing in front of the gloriously stomach-churning 'The sooner you get away from here the better' is like experiencing post-vomit catharsis. Glossy turd-shaped gobs of oil paint look as if they've been excreted onto this toxic landscape of brightly coloured toys, hair accessories and chocolate. In the monumental 'Cast', formalism mixes with theatre;

like the motley cast members of a West End musical, gaudy geometric shapes, Plasticine balls and a giant red scrunchy hang off a wire grid. There is little depth of field to images in which objects swim in and out of view with digital precision. Presented on plinths in the centre of the space, the sculptural source material provides the real entry point into these formulaic but trashily touching paintings. *Rebecca Geldard*



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