

NEW YORK IN REVIEW

Outer Limits, curated by Tom Solomon (Holly Solomon, September 20–October 21), also reaches for a beyond that is really an "in." Art as recycling or retreatment center is one way to keep primed for fame: but the process must be completed by synthesis and evaluation. Only the sense of synthesis provided by the curator's strong grip kept this show together. Sean Landers's *The Slave* stands on its own, and is also an allegory for the rest of the show. A plaster cast of the famous Michelangelo is embedded in a block, or container, of polyester resin, displayed on a marble pedestal. The long division is difficult here: an nth-generation mass-produced (immaterial) cast of a copy of an original is embedded inside a container which has the look of a biology-class formaldehyde jar. The jar is fogged up by a melodramatic memory of the "abnormal brain" accidentally picked up by Igor when filching body parts for Dr. Frankenstein. Two traditions collide to create a beauty that gives off decidedly mixed feelings. Luciano da Napoli's material operation is somewhat more purist. Perhaps a homesick sentiment for the Vesuvius that overlooks his eponymous city fuels his recycling plant. Magazines like *Flash Art* are pulped, then framed as abstract art. Only a square value system generates meaning from such an exchange, however. Carl Ostendarp's *Mellonta Tauta* inhabits a spot on the new abstraction moon somewhere between Mare Larry Poonsia and The Plain of Tom Brazelton. The look of the art is highly patented—protected by an individual gene splice. Ostendarp's materialism has had the cream skimmed off its top by an excess of mental quickness, rushing on to highlight and illustrate its coolness. There is an odd two-years-after-neo-geo-thinness to Brad Dunning's clean constructs as well; Ashley Bickertonisms partialized by an individual focus. Only John Franklin, whose *Woooin' and kissin', and shootin' and killin'* tossed a welcome wreath around a double-negation of the Amerindian origins of the custom, perhaps—an Indian trademark for a ham colored up as a peacock to compete with NBC—and Greg Colson, whose *Tulane Stadium* slices memory with the inverse fury of jock manqué in a feeding frenzy—carefully mapping a seat-chart of the stadium on the back of a pizza delivery box—talk resonantly enough about what a drag it is to be an artist in America. Then, they get beyond it, and get over it. For American male artists (no females in this show), *Outer Limits* can only mean getting out in the world and not worrying about being *in* in the art world.

By Robert Mahoney