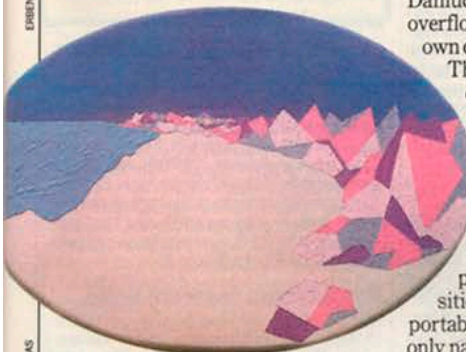


Meredith Danluck, "Channel Surfing"

Andrew Kreps Gallery, through Sat 3 (see Chelsea).

Artist Robert Smithson once wrote, "Words and rocks contain a language that follows a syntax of splits and ruptures. Look at any word long enough, and you will see it open up into a series of faults, into a terrain of particles each containing its own void." In Meredith Danluck's third solo show, we can extend this seismic metaphor to painting: Here, five works verge on the sculptural as Danluck samples a range of painterly effects—Pollock-like drips, broad graffiti strokes, and chiseled, contoured edges—to suggest that surface is only a mirage concealing empty space below.



Meredith Danluck, *Virtual Vacation, 2000.*

Oladélé Bamgboye, "The Unmasking, Part II and earlier photoworks"

Thomas Erben Gallery, through June 10 (see Chelsea).

Londoner Oladélé Bamgboye made a splash on the international scene in 1997 at Documenta X with the dramatic video installation *Homeward Bound*, which focused on the artist's relationship with his native Nigeria. His first solo show in the U.S., "The Unmasking, Part II and earlier photoworks," is similarly ambitious but offers a less impressive blend of new media works.

With *The Unmasking, Part II*, Bamgboye bites off more than he can chew, especially with regard to the impact of new media on museums. The

Oladélé Bamgboye, *Arise I, 1991-97.*



For instance, the painting *2000 Windows* is just that: a honeycomb of rounded cells that covers the canvas and resembles a bank of airplane windows opening to an infinite expanse of blue sky. Danluck dispenses with historical notions of flatness versus depth; instead, she reveals how surface flourishes are never merely ornamental or kitsch, but rather act as screens or lenses through which we view an implied other side. Considering that her paintings have a thick, slablike quality, revealing the craggy edges of a meteor and tiny grains of glitter that refract light, Smithson's description of a sedimentary deposit's splitting open seems even more appropriate. Danluck is nothing if not intent on excavating the various facets of her own paintings, as well as those of art history.

Of course, the show's title suggests an even more expansive inquiry, and Danluck attempts to match today's overflow of pluralist styles with her own data bank of cultural references:

The gallery installation also includes utopian geodesic architecture, a cushioned walnut lounge chair and a shelving unit housing CDs that are, in turn, jacketed in ultrasuede "gloves." I took a seat and started gazing at Danluck's beige, pink and light blue paintings from my reclining position. I cued up DJ Prozac on the portable CD player; the choice seemed only natural for a show that is strangely tranquil but never tranquilizing. —David Hunt

installation features three computer monitors, each examining such aspects of this phenomenon as digital archiving, Web-based programming and other Net-related exhibition strategies. One screen, for instance, displays the physical relocation of the British Museum's collection of Egyptian art from one gallery to another, along with images of stored Yoruba objects from Calgary's Glenbow Museum; we also see Bamgboye himself placing antique objects from the archives of the San Antonio Museum into a high-tech, 3-D scanner (an accompanying text, written by the artist, recalls '80s-style commodity critique theories). Nearby, an iMac clone gives audiences the chance to play with images of the antiques he's scanned, while on the floor, two light-boxes feature more of the same imagery. The third computer controls a scanner—so you can bring in your own stuff and scan it, though just why you would is anyone's guess.

The institutional framework of the museum has already been dissected by such artists as Fred Wilson, Mark Dion and Renée Green; Bamgboye's attempt to re-examine this issue from the perspective of the computer age adds little to their efforts.

Seemingly unrelated, but far more compelling, are the large-scale black-and-white photographs, *Arise I* and *2*. These nude self-portraits, set against backdrops of African textiles, seem to refer to the outstanding portraiture of Seydou Keita—proving that Bamgboye's work is at its strongest when he opts for traditional over cutting-edge. —Karen E. Jones

Craig Kalpakjian

Robert Miller Gallery, through Jun 10 (see Chelsea).

People often discuss "cyberspace" as if it were a world apart. That's the cliché; the reality is more like a technological sphere that's infiltrating our manual, analog one and shaping our perception along the way. Play *Myst* for a while and see if later you don't find yourself mentally clicking on doorways and street signs. On a more literal note, that chair you're sitting in was probably designed on a computer. Either way, we're already living at a time when the real and virtual aren't really opposed.

Art usually registers such shifts in perspective, and Craig Kalpakjian's latest show offers a great example. Using architectural design programs like Form Z and Lightscape (if these sound unfamiliar, don't worry; you've seen them at work in *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*), Kalpakjian generates renderings of room interiors, hallways and ducts completely by computer. They are both gorgeous and remarkably realistic, with subtle shadings and reflections of light playing across textured surfaces to create images that seem more like photographs of actual rooms than geometries conjured from ones and zeros.

Kalpakjian also alludes to the greater cultural context for such technological feats: Dim corridors and surveillance devices capture the menacing mood of In-

Craig Kalpakjian, *HVAC IV, 2000.*



ternet tracking and software monopolies. One hallway in particular has the clean, uniform, almost pharmaceutical complexion of a Microsoft nightmare. And the works' highly reflective surfaces place any viewer's image smack in the frame—a phantom figure, as immersed in the compressed vacuum of computerized space as any Web surfer.

To be sure, there are lesser works: One image of a surveillance camera comes a bit too close to M.C. Escher's nifty spatial conundrum *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*. But that's easily overlooked when viewing more abstract pieces like *Dark Hall II*, where the darkness is nearly total. At first glance, the image is flat and uniform except for a single, barely discernible seam down the center. Then your eyes adjust to see that the thinnest veil of light falls around a hallway corner. Suddenly, surface becomes space. At that point, Kalpakjian becomes an Ad Reinhardt for the digital age. —Tim Griffin

Stephen Shore

303 Gallery, through Sat 3 (see Chelsea).

Stephen Shore's bio certainly reads like a photographic prodigy's. MoMA collected his work when he was 14; at 24 (in 1971), he was the first living photographer to have a one-man show at the Metropolitan Museum. This show features two bodies of work: large-scale color landscapes taken between 1978 and 1988, and a series of small-scale, vernacular photos called "American Surfaces" (which debuted at the '71 Met exhibit). The series are quite different in mood, but perhaps as a result, Shore's range is demonstrated that much more effectively.

Although Shore shot many of his large-scale landscapes out West, they seem to be from everywhere and nowhere at once: We see big swaths of grass and rocks under huge vistas of bright blue sky. Even while there are no unique, identifying features to latch onto, the works hum with immediacy. Every blade of grass, every wildflower is portrayed with almost lovingly crisp focus. One is reminded of such photographers as Axel Hutte or Jeff Wall, but Shore predates them by about a decade.

The scenes in "American Surfaces" are decidedly less bucolic but more profound. Shore shot them during a cross-

country trip, and they look like the travelogue of a visitor to a strange planet full of kitschy signage and Formica. Best are the interiors, in which Shore demonstrates an incredible knack for capturing the exquisitely banal: a TV dinner perched on a stove; a Borden milk carton on a shiny red table; a lone plate of greasy fried eggs. The colors are sensual, the subjects



Stephen Shore, *Untitled 32A, 1972.*

downright ugly. Shore offers up the most unappealing objects with beautiful clarity, without unnecessarily flattering his subjects or himself.

It's a pity that Shore's isn't more of a household name, but judging from this show, his relative anonymity is very much in keeping with his sensibility. The photographer has so much respect for the liminal, in-between places in daily life—the stuff we tend to take for granted—that making him famous would only change the spirit of the work. —Sarah Schmerler