

PRESS RELEASE

Lea or Luis Remba
Phone 310-657-1101
Fax 310-657-1153

The Remba Gallery is pleased to announce the release of three new Mixografia editions by Tom Wesselmann. An opening reception will be held on January 10, 1998, at the Remba Gallery from 6 to 9 p.m. at 462 North Robertson Boulevard in West Hollywood. The exhibition will continue until February 28.

Wesselmann is probably best known for his *Great American Nude* series. Over his career, he has taken the traditional subjects of painting (reclining female nudes, still life, portraiture, interiors and landscapes) and given them a new twist by painting them in the Pop style. The resulting works are often ironic images that relate to popular culture and have the slickness of advertisements. In fact, in many of his collages, Wesselmann co-opts ads, packaging and even television sets from the world of "low culture" in order to question art's status as part of high culture.

The series of three mixografias are images of a female nude, a seascape and a bouquet of flowers. Each is typical of Wesselmann's established style and his skill as a colorist is evident. The brilliant hues are especially saturated because of the use of the mixografia technique and the high relief used is emphasized by printing that extends ninety degrees to print both the front and the "sides" of the image.

Wesselmann's *Blonde Vivienne* relates both to the nudes of his *Great American Nude* series and to the *Bedroom* paintings that he has also done. As with the *Great American Nude* works, the woman is an anonymous figure who is an archetype of all things female. In contrast, the scene-as with the *Bedroom* series-is the intimate space of her boudoir. As in art historical images of a woman at her toilette, we are given a privileged glimpse into her private world, although it seems to be at odds with the rather distant rendering of the woman. Like images in advertising, the figure is both inviting and distant.

Seascape shows Wesselmann's mastery of both color and composition. In a departure from his mainly figurative style, the image is rather abstractly formed out of a few sketchy lines. The liveliness of the lines efficiently delineate the scene while giving it the feeling of motion and change that suit the subject matter.

As in *Bouquet*, a colorful still life of velvety blossoms, flowers often appear in Wesselmann's work. Sometimes as decorations in a woman's bedroom, or as the artist states, as a way of linking the fertility that women have brought to his work to the organic fertility of nature.

Wesselmann's work forms a link between the Pop sensibility that arose in the 1960's and the formal concerns that were introduced to him by way of his Abstract Expressionist training.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturday 11:00 to 5:30 p.m. and by appointment.