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Art: 2 Interesting Talents Make Debut

By HILTON KRAMER

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As the art season draws to a close this month, two interesting new talents—both women—are making their debut in New York with solo exhibitions: Kay Kurt at the Kornblee Gallery, 58 East 79th Street, and Pat Lipsky at the Emmerich Gallery, 41 East 57th Street. Both are painters with strongly defined styles. Both bring impressive technical gifts to their work and both leave an impression of large ambitions and clearly thought-out positions on questions of style and pictorial method.

Miss Kurt is a representational painter—a “super realist” of sorts—who favors a specific imagery: candy. Last summer she was represented in the big pop art exhibition in London with an oversize painting of a box of chocolates. In her current exhibition at the Kornblee Gallery, she has turned to those small, translucent jelly candies made in the shape of animals that are, apparently, still abundantly available in Germany. She treats this motif as if it were the stuff of which monuments are made, and in the process transforms the banal into—well, what?

As Miss Kurt renders these candy animals, they are given the dimensions of a heroic sculpture. Their translucency is brilliantly exaggerated by a flawless technique. Set against a solid black field, with a hard-edge silhouette, the candy animal looks at times like a souvenir of an ancient civilization. The banal has been made, if not exactly heroic, at least ambiguous.

These paints are certainly impressive as technical feats of illustration, I don't think they really attain the level of fantasy to which they seem to aspire, yet they boast an element of expression that cannot be completely reduced to the illustrational. In painting 40 coldly reasoned, I miss an essential element—some trace of intellectual complexity or irrational obsession. Still, this is an interesting debut.

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albertz benda

515 W 26th St | New York, NY | 10001
Tel 212.244.2579 | www.albertzbenda.com