

of Bascove's work. The artist's to explain the calm, contemplative vision revealed in her work. A quintessential Bascove Young Woman with Cat, 40 by inches (a gridded square) picture is a subtly expressive, loving exploration of the distance and surroundings of a sitter (Bascove's niece). She is a tabby cat in her arms, is flanked by a table supporting a mug and spoon, with a dily-leaved plant behind. The man is a natural beauty; Bascove delineates her appeal in fully formal terms without toning it, except perhaps in textural volupté of a fawn-in shirt and brilliant off-cobalt

here is a nostalgia for high fernism in Bascove's overt zations; a direct antecedent be seen in Léger's geometric entializing of the figure, as l as his bright palette. thetic Cubism is an influence veil. It all adds up to a fin-de- de mannerism that serves such subjects as a mother her child thoughtfully building urple model airplane; a neg- ed woman lying on her side in t reading beneath a green- ss lamp, with a cat tucked

ter Anderson: *Peircean*, 1955-60, watercolor on paper, by 11 inches; at Luise Ross.



Bascove: *Young Woman with Cat*, 1955, oil on canvas, 40 inches square; Jptown.



firmly against her lower torso, or a *Still Life with Leeks and Artichokes* in which the vegetables are so anthropomorphically rendered that to consider eating them would be tantamount to an act of cannibalism.

Bascove has also done a number of New York bridge paintings. These high colored descriptions of complex geometric structures sometimes look like Joseph Stella on an acid trip. Generally, though, the work is benign and beautiful; its most deeply felt quality is a kind of animating *tendresse* all too rare in New York today. It is not sentimental, but full of genuine sentiment. That is an achievement. —Gerrit Henry

### K.K. Kozik at Bill Maynes

K.K. Kozik's recent paintings could illustrate picture books for grownups or, with one exception, for sophisticated children. Though sparsely populated, the mostly nocturnal scenes in these smallish 1995 works suggest dreamlike narratives: a canoeist slides from a suburban driveway into the wilderness (*Mad River*), a fancifully layered tower rises from a barren landscape (*Queen for a Day*), a canopy bed perches atop a rocky pinnacle (in an untitled canvas). With cartoon figures, graffiti and 1970s advertising logos showing up in much recent painting, why shouldn't childhood picture books be legitimate source material?

Kozik layers odd details to set up complex, often wry, associations. The works are colorful, crisply drawn and deftly painted. Proportion, scale and perspective are sometimes slightly skewed; modeling of forms is a bit exaggerated so that objects have the feel of animation stills rather than being straightforwardly realistic. For instance, in *Age of Innocence* a Victorian fainting couch seems to have assumed the character of its missing occupant, who left an open book flopped face down on its arm. Soft lighting in the vintage room adds to the feeling of fantasy, as does the darkness beyond an open door. A glowing wallpaper forest of arts-and-crafts-style trees further transforms the environment.

*Civil Society* is similarly nostalgic and likewise unfolds possibilities. Candlelit dining tables appointed

with festive cloths and bouquets are set end to end through city streets. No partygoers are visible. An untitled interior is equally mysterious with its open french doors and still-smoldering cigarette in an ash-tray. The wryly phallic desert tower in *Queen for a Day*, one wrap-around balcony occupied by pairs of naked, copulating adults whose joined figures form the letter "K" and other levels occupied by circus elephants and bongo drummers, is a dreamscape open to limitless speculation.

—Ann Wilson Lloyd

### Phil Sims at the Crosby Street Project

Phil Sims's new "Stable Paintings," destined for the converted stables of the Panza estate in Varese, Italy, were painted in situ at 113 Crosby Street, where they were later shown in an installation that had the air of a modernist chapel. These five pale, large-scaled monochromes (all 12 by 9 feet) appeared opaque at first, their surfaces smooth and uninflected. Almost immediately, however, as the eye adjusted to the dim light, the surfaces began to waver, different localities emerged, like the faintest of shadows. Simultaneously, a scaffold of rectangularly shaped brushstrokes was revealed.

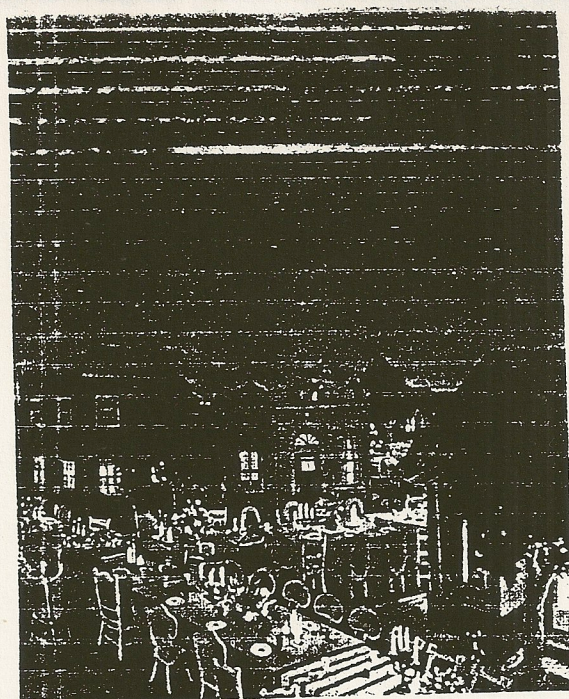
These are placed horizontally and vertically in an interlocking pattern. The strokes are both lustrous and matte, subtly lighter and darker and regularly cadenced: a structuring of pure color and sensation. This alternation creates a kind of modeling, as if each stroke were shaded and made slightly three-dimensional, shaping an indeterminate spatiality which coexists with the paintings' flatness.

What you saw depended upon the changes of light. Yet for all their lightness of being, these paintings did not soar, compressed into a space that

was the wrong size for them; they needed more breathing room. In addition, the lighting was not optimal, illuminating the upper regions of the canvases but not the lower; it also did not adequately set off the modulations and nuances of the colors.

Furthermore, the scale of the works themselves is problematic, the expanses too great for the pale yellow, the soft green, rosy coral, blue-violet and silvery gray to sustain. These reticent, delicate pastel shades, reminiscent of the sweet, clear hues of Sassetta and Domenico Veneziano, seem stretched beyond their capacities. Contrary to Gauguin's notion, a meter of color is not always more definitive than a centimeter of that same color. The texture is dry and crumbled—Sims mixes his own paints out of pigments and wax, adding enaik, at times, for brittleness—which makes the color seem almost immaterial in places—such passages are opposed by strokes of higher sheen, with their suggestion of sensuality.

While the balance between intellection, materiality and sensation is finely tuned, the overall effect—conveyed by brushwork that is, in the end, too programmatic—is one of detachment. These paintings come across as more schematic than other series of his "color-images," as



K.K. Kozik: *Civil Society*, 1995, oil on linen, 72 by 57 inches, at Bill Maynes.