

# Art in America

March 2003

## NEW PALTZ, N.Y.

### Leslie Wayne and Don Porcaro at the Dorsky Museum

The painter Leslie Wayne and her husband, sculptor Don Porcaro, combined their very different works in this delightfully sympathetic show. They defined it as two solos—she called hers “Love in the Afternoon” and he called his “Oracle”—but they occupied the same gallery and each gained something from the other’s presence. Here both artists worked smaller than usual, and each showed 60 recent pieces.

Porcaro, who regularly shows at Kouros Gallery in Manhattan, works in a modernist vein, primarily using carved stone. He favors a generous but not monumental scale. Here, however, the sculptures were hand-size, which gave them an intimacy along with their characteristic tactility. They were shown on narrow steel tables that were lined up in the center of the room. Each little object is titled *Art-or-Fact* and consists of multiple parts of various colors. Typically there is some sort of stone in the middle and a range of curious metal or rubber caps, bases, wheels, han-



Leslie Wayne: *Love in the Afternoon* #12, 1995, oil on wood, 6 by 4½ inches; at the Dorsky Museum.

Don Porcaro: *Art-or-Fact* #15, 2002, stone, metal rubber, 3 by 8 by 3 inches; at the Dorsky Museum.



dles, frames or unidentifiable things at each end. These parts often appear to be found items. Every work has some round element, which adds to the pleasantness and sense of play of the whole. Small scale proves to be extremely congenial for the forms Porcaro likes to make. (The variousness, small size and table presentation recall John Newman’s recent works, but these are simpler, less scientific-looking and more toylike.)

Wayne, who shows at Jack Shainman, uses paint on canvas as a sculptural material. The paint is thickly layered one color at a time, then excavated, sliced, lifted, folded, scraped, drawn out, pressed down. Although the work in her most recent Shainman show was larger, here she gathered earlier and new small paintings; in any size her work draws you up close to examine her physical treatment of paint. You see the effect of gravity in addition to Wayne’s nimble touch. She seems utterly enamored of color, swept away by its variety and appeal. She also uses it functionally, to emphasize the accumulated, disrupted and superseded surfaces. In this size, the gentle deliberateness of her manipulations seems magnified, yet the work loses none of its intensity and does not become precious. Perhaps that’s because the paintings look more playful when seen in association with Porcaro’s sculptures, and his works seem more colorful in conjunction with hers.

—Janet Koplos