

ART IN REVIEW

Aaron Curry: 'Buzz Kill'

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An advertisement for Aaron Curry's impressive second New York solo features the image of a voluptuous, bare-breasted woman bursting upward from an ancient stone sculpture. Lifted from a heavy-metal comic book and framed by a hot-pink mat, that image, a collage, appears at the start of the show, announcing Mr. Curry's preoccupation with a vein of primitivist fantasy animating Modernist art.

A multi-ton sculpture resembling one of Alexander Calder's stabiles dominates the main gallery. Thick aluminum slabs painted bright pinkish-orange intersect at the room's center and extend nearly to its corners with arched cutouts allowing visitors to walk through. More parody than homage, it spoofs the urge to archaic monumentality that has driven sculptors from Henry Moore to Richard Serra.

Mr. Curry created a disorienting environment for that sculpture and smaller ones by covering the walls, ceiling and floor with hollow-core cardboard panels bearing grainy, black-and-white photographs of what seem to be his own studio walls. It is as if the old world of solidity and gravity had been swallowed by a dematerializing virtual reality. He also cut pieces of other panels into curvy shapes that he has fitted together into Surrealistic totems. Standing on Cubist bases of welded industrial metal parts, they are paradoxical pastiches of atavistic futurism.

It is a curious Oedipal drama that Mr. Curry stages. Wielding postmodernist insouciance as a club, he seems intent on overthrowing the fathers of Modernist sculpture and having their primordial muse for himself.