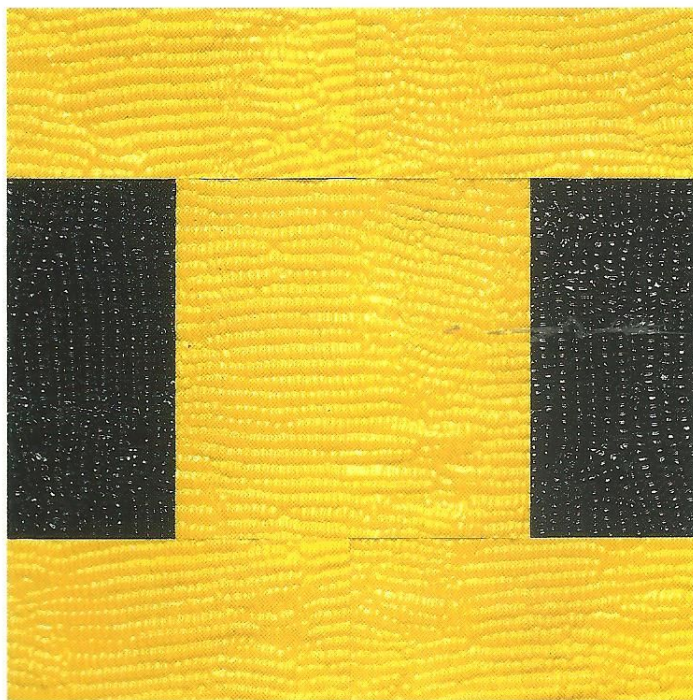


DOUG EDGE



Grosvenor Gallery

Grosvenor Gallery (Fine Arts) Limited

18 Albemarle Street, London W1X 3HA
Tel: 0171-629 0891 Fax: 0171-491 4391
E-Mail: ggfa@dial.pipex.com
V.A.T. Registration No. 645 2528 36

DOUG EDGE

5th - 28th November 1997

	<u>£</u>		<u>£</u>
1.	600.00	7.	12500.00
2.	600.00	8.	2250.00
3.	600.00	9.	1100.00
4.	600.00	10.	1100.00
5.	3250.00	11.	1100.00
6.	3250.00	12.	1100.00

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ADDITIONAL WORKS

Cat. 11 *Recipe*, 1996
cast plastic
39.3 x 39.3 x 5.1 cm
Numbered 19

Cat. 12 *Recipe*, 1996
cast plastic
39.3 x 39.3 x 5.1 cm
Numbered 16

Doug Edge: The Thorn Pieces, or Bramble's Way

Doug Edge has always shown a rare and dangerously adept facility with materials, all manner of materials. To speak of Edge's work is invariably and unavoidably to assemble lists, long lists, of the seemingly infinite types and varieties of media in which he has worked and the extraordinary range of techniques he has expertly employed in crafting these. Edge's remarkable dexterity and range have often worked against him. Having assiduously avoided the repetitious trap of signitive style which characterised the more visible aspects of post war art production, the rapacious merchandising and market receptivity which are fueled by this brand name recognition have often eluded Edge. While the appearance of his work has changed with the medium and its concomitant craft, the conceptual basis threading its way throughout his body of work remains consistent: a clear understanding of the dialogue engendered in formal terms by the media in question; a mode of audience address which endeavours to undertake an intensely committed, progressive, but often quixotic form of serious social or artistic protest; an overriding pleasure in the compelling necessity and practice of making art, and an exuberant physical joy in this artist's sheer facility and talent in manipulating, crafting, controlling all types of materials.

Edge seems to have no "learning curve" when beginning work in a new media. His initial approach is utterly fearless. He is a man who so intuitively understands the nature of each respective medium, its inherent properties, and so fully and passionately rejoices in and celebrates the inherent possibility of each, that his subject matter and content may often strike the viewer as secondary.

One of the first artists in Los Angeles to use the new plastic resins to make art, Edge first began by casting resin polymers in 1966. From its position as the fine art medium of choice in the seventies, plastics, in the intervening two decades, has become synonymous with the degraded, the low-brow, the detritus of contemporary life. In the nineties, it crams the dumps and landfills of America, as discarded plastic bottles, fast food containers, lawn furniture, children's toys overwhelmingly become the vast majority of America's overwhelming, inescapable burden of non-biodegradable trash. It was this identity as a "pariah material", despised and neglected since the 1980s return to painting, that impelled the artist's recent return to plastics.

"About two or three years ago, I began trying to figure out how to get back into plastic. I'd been using wood to make art, but it was too seductive. People were seduced by the craftsmanship. Plastic is a throw-away material; no one respects it intrinsically, the way they do bronze, for example. It's a pariah, but it's visually so exciting!"

(The author in conversation with the artist, 16 September 1997.)

The results were the "Thorn Pieces" and the "Cornfield Pieces". These pieces represent Edge's return to casting in plastic after a general hiatus of nearly 25 years. Rather than approaching the medium as a purely sculptural one, this new work embodies a peculiar amalgam, a hybrid of the two - and three- dimensional. Shallow wall reliefs of a cool, unappealing tactility, they use a conventionally object-oriented substance to address painting's formalist conventions as defined by artists throughout this century. The surface of each square wall panel is comprised or strewn with a rich bouillabaisse of assorted protuberances, the majority of them sharp-edged and thorn-like.

Neither stalactites nor stalagmites, but rather some new gravity-defying representation of the same genus and species, these playfully colored accretions seem to grow horizontally off the wall plane, like warts on a hand or blemishes on a teenage face. Despite the patent

artificiality of their plastic colors - the sweet hues of children's toys, the confectionery tones of Tupperware storage containers in a saccharin, sixties psychedelic palette made ubiquitous by mass production and advertising - the tiny crags and peaked accretions which crowd Edge's surfaces seem naturally formed. They appear to grow like a strange colony of barnacles or coral, affixed to and accruing from the side of a sea cavern or the rusting wall of a sunken vessel. Striations of unshaded pink, green, white, red, turquoise, black, yellow and blue comprise each tiny peak, as if a mad cartographer strove crazily to convey the imaginary geography of some strange world in a confused topography of fanciful mountainous terrain. The viewer, as navigator of this peculiar country, searches in vain for a rational key to understanding the map's system, the varying relationships of the height of each accretion's pinnacle to the colors of its striations.

With prolonged looking are revealed, scattered among the striated, thorny peaks and crags, spiraled cones, turbinated shells, coiled carapaces and creamy dollop shapes, each in a single, unstriated color. Upon even closer inspection, out from the sea of jostling, crowding accretions emerge black fingertips vastly in the minority amidst the spikes and thorns - as if to touch, entice, beckon and opportune the viewer into closer contact. Now that several have been spied, others, each in a single monochrome, seem to magically appear, some fine and slender, with narrow, delicately shaped nails carefully manicured, others thick and stubby each with a nail both ridged and nicked from manual labor. Is this a joking reference to the much vaunted notion of the "touch of the artist", usually invoked in reference to a painting's richly stroked and impastoed surface?

The eye searches for the emergence of a pattern or a coherently composed design or composition amidst the rubbery forest of projecting tubers, but a cohesive image or schema stubbornly refuses to coalesce out of the dense topography of colors and forms. Their varicolored stipple effect scatters and deflects the gaze, refusing respite or intuition of order. The panels are formed by pouring layer upon contrasting coloured layer of liquid plastic polymer into a shallow dimensional mould while turning it upon a lazy-Susan, ninety degrees after each pour. The color hierarchy or order of striations from peak to neighboring peak is thereby not consistent or identical to that of its pimply companions. This peculiar approach to "building" a pictorial surface three-dimensionally according to a somewhat random order and centrifugal logic is in dimensional tension, if not outright opposition, to the finished work's planar relationship to both the wall on which they are hung and to the perceptive device of the human eye.

These are composition-less paintings. Or rather, they introduce qualities which are different from and perhaps antithetical to the compositional values as generally established and practiced in a post-war formalist painting. While offering a range of expression from work to work, some exuberantly business-like and their more pleasantly decorative, these surfaces, in their color gradations, patterns and tactile dynamism, destroy both possibilities of conventional painterly illusionism and abject flatness.

The relationship of the "Thorn Pieces" to the wall as support is an ambiguous one: They do not use the wall as an implied recessive space into which the object illusionistically recedes or out of which it projects. Rather, these are a curiously funny contemporary analogue, or perhaps an answer, to the history-making compositional device and resulting dynamic, infinitely extensive space of Jackson Pollock's painting which have dominated painting's dialogue since their making. Perhaps these "paintings", in their deadpan, dispassionate mode of address and perplexing space at last lay down and move beyond that dialogue as the century closes with the approach of the new millenium.

Michele De Angelus

Solo Exhibitions

Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles	1969
Cirrus Gallery, Los Angeles	1971
Cirrus Gallery, Los Angeles	1972
Cirrus Gallery, Los Angeles	1973
Cirrus Gallery, Los Angeles	1975
Visible Light Gallery, Santa Barbara	1980
Ruth Schaffner Gallery, Santa Barbara	1982
Gregory Ghent Gallery, San Francisco	1983
Swope Gallery, Los Angeles	1983
Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles	1988
Earl McGrath Gallery, Los Angeles	1990
Works Gallery, Long Beach	1992

Group Exhibitions

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	1968
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago	1970
Newport Harbour Art Museum, Newport Beach	1974
Richard Bennett Gallery, Los Angeles	1987
Viafora Gallery, New York	1989
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles	1993
Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach	1994
Museum of Modern Art, New York	1995
I Rassegna d'Arte Internazionale, Fossato di Vico	1996

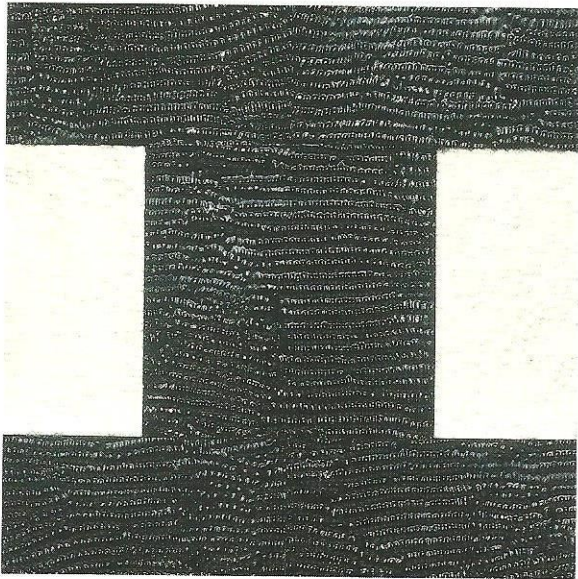
Collections

Museum of Modern Art, New York
Lannan Foundation, Los Angeles
Frederick Weisman Co., Los Angeles
C.J. Segerstrom and Sons, Imperial Bank, Costa Mesa
Atlantic Richfield, Washington D.C.
Principal Financial Group, Des Moines
Blue Cross Insurance, Los Angeles
Flor Corporation, Irvine
Reinga Corporation, Santa Barbara
Oakland Museum, Oakland
Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach
Eli Broad, Sun America, Los Angeles
Bank of America, Los Angeles

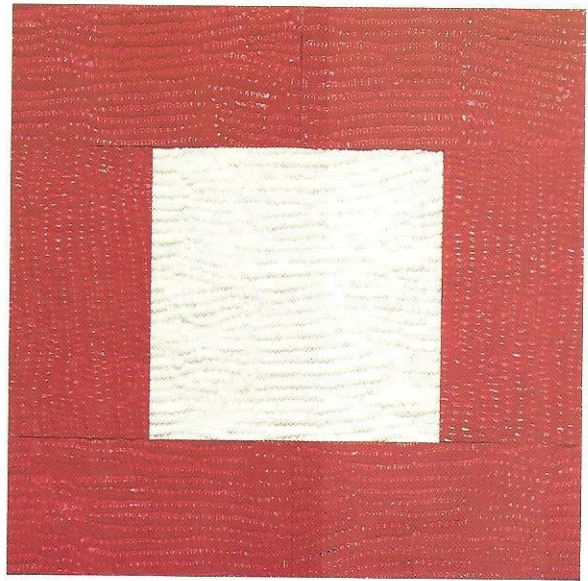
STATEMENT

First came a pagan plastic
clone in a clown suit.
Thorns from a tree and shells from the sea.
Eye candy with shark teeth,
my fingers and alligator feet.
Then came pop corn field
plane of the plains.
My grandfather and his father raised corn.
Aztecs worshipped the corn god,
then the corn was given to
the white man by the red man.
After Malevich,
after Rodchenko and Mondrian,
the love affair with the absolute
has been continued and continues.
Still absolutely
fresh and full of vitamins.
A fourth dimensional projection of
corn on the cob in space and time.
The plastic pagan absolute.

DOUG EDGE
VENICE, CA.
1997



1 **Corn Field, 1997**
cast plastic
37 x 37cm
Numbered 33



2 **Corn Field, 1997**
cast plastic
37 x 37cm
Numbered 37

3 **Corn Field, 1997**
cast plastic
37 x 37cm
Numbered 29

4 **Corn Field, 1997**
cast plastic
37 x 37cm
Numbered 34
See Cover

RECIPE

I wanted to make a primal soup,
pagan and plastic,
in praise of all nature.

Main stock of chorisia speciosa thorns,
a few baby carrots, a few baby cactus.

A pinch of alligator foot and assorted seeds.

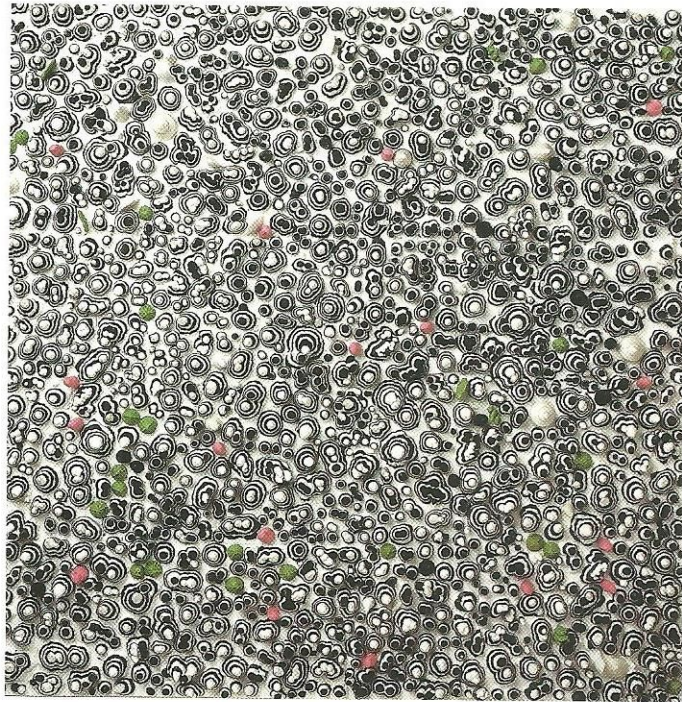
A dash of salty signifier of the sea,
shells and shark teeth.

All colors of fingers complete
this meal for the eye.

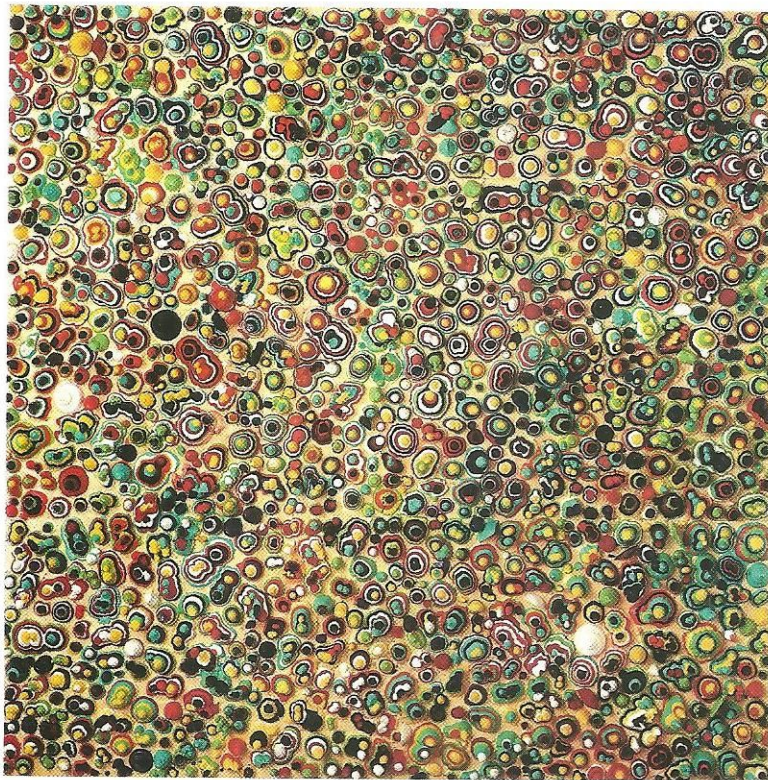
Spicy without angst.

One can read the news for that.

Doug Edge
September 1997
Venice, Calif.



5 **Recipe, 1997**
cast plastic
88.8 x 88.8 x 5.1cm
Numbered 8



6 **Recipe, 1997**
cast plastic
90.8 x 90.8 x 5.1cm
Numbered 1

7 **Recipe, 1997**
cast plastic
108.8 x 108.8 x 7.6cm
Numbered 36

8 **Recipe, 1996**
cast plastic
59.7 x 59.7 x 5.1cm
Numbered 18

9 **Recipe, 1996**
cast plastic
39.3 x 39.3 x 5.1cm
Numbered 8

10 **Recipe, 1996**
cast plastic
39.3 x 39.3 x 5.1cm
Numbered 13