



Jason Fox

CABINET

It is 1973. In a purple-painted basement on Sunset Boulevard are the psychedelic paintings and sculptures of New Yorker Jason Fox... Except that they're not, they're here, in an obscure gallery, and were painted last year. 'Dark Side of the Moon' is a black quilt on which a tracery of elongated globules is painted in red, grey and flesh pink. His sculpture of a camp fire is made of real sticks painted to resemble wood (that's America for you). They are looped together with red chord and ooze red paint onto canvas. Another sculpture consists of figures made from bought papier mâché: stiff, white bullet-headed aliens with holes in their stomachs, through which pass the wires of a miniature sound system. Around the figures are the bark chippings used on flower beds in public parks. Music is essential to Fox's art; the tapes are by Hendrix and Bowie, but also Sonic Youth and

Dinosaur Jr. (How about Mudhoney's 'Touch me I'm Sick?').

The paintings are the bastard offspring of Salvador Dali and Fat Freddy's Cat. This is the world of aliens with exposed brains, of '70s album covers and 'underground' comics in which the humour is scatological and so is the sex: in Fox's visceral Eden all orifices are equal. However, his half-man-half-squid 'biomorphs' are a cast of characters, not portraits of the artist's soul. 'Flash Art' magazine says of him and others (this, God help us, is the new wave) 'this is not a "tendency" ... but a profound transformation of the figurative artist.' This may be going a bit far but, if such a transformation is taking place, it probably looks like this. Cartoonists might object that all he's done is to put cartoons in a gallery; others that he's chewing up and spitting out bits of '70s subculture. Perhaps. But to both the reply must be: he's done it, it's timely, he's developed it - and he's good. It's stupid, intelligent and disgusting: thoroughly enjoyable. *David Lillington*