

letters on the floor and two orange-red pillars serving as a frame. An s-shaped line links the two parts of the phrase. It's both astounding and satisfying to be so moved by such simple elements. [VG]

Through Jan. 21, Marian Goodman Gallery, 24 W. 57th St., 212-977-7160.

Pavers

Last year Schroeder Romero & Shredder acquired a new space and a new mission to mix decorative art into its offerings of contemporary art. This quirky combination of fine and applied arts perfectly suits the tenor of the times, but gallery-goers hankering for "high" art will still be rewarded by Pavers, an illuminating selection of modernist and contemporary works by women, currently installed in the gallery's three smaller rooms.

Nodding only occasionally to postmodernism and feminism, the two dozen painters and sculptors "pave the way" by confronting the original challenges of modernism. A sturdy canvas from 1950 by Nell Blaine catches this accomplished colorist's transition from abstraction to representation. The limpid hues of Lee Krasner's watercolor intriguingly expand the standard vocabulary of Abstract-Expressionism. Next to it, the gestures of a small Joan Mitchell drawing—four scribbles in each of four colors—radiate a kind of forceful indetermination. Four Cubist sculptures of figures and animals produced by Louise Nevelson in the mid-'40s are a surprise; though not groundbreaking stylistically, they are full of original plastic vigor. Most startling of all is her very early painting, which depicts in glowing tones a nude woman standing improbably before sailboats.

Among contemporary works, two

small paintings from 2010 by Susanna Coffey—one a nest of swirling, colorful lines—suggest a continuing evolution of her self-portraits. An early painting by Melissa Meyer, looser and meatier than recent work, measures out the height of a large canvas in turgid, swirling reds. Evoking trees and sky, the earthy greens and silvery blues of Evelyn Twitchell's canvas exude a meditative luminosity.

The more derivative works here seem content to repave. Hilla Rebay's small, undated watercolor recapitulates the usual elements of biomorphic surrealism; Loren MacIver's painting of the coy counterplay between a railing, rainbow and vine barely surmounts the decorative.

The most striking works are also among the smallest. These are two 1979 Louisa Matthásdóttir watercolors, tiny cityscapes that are the very embodiment of spirited visual experience. With authoritative strokes, her drawing conveys the bold horizontal marches of stone bridges and the countering flagpoles and lampposts; her hues—the expanding warmth of green peering over a bridge's pale yellows, the absorbent deep blue-green of water beneath—weight these rhythms with the dynamism of a specific light.

Two sumptuous vases have been installed on either side of these watercolors, their iridescent hues intended, perhaps, to complement the painter's observations. This highlights the awkward dilemma of the installation: Are the accompanying objets d'art—the vases, Art-Deco ottomans with gilded legs, Louis XV-style chairs fashioned in transparent polycarbonate—intended to accessorize the earnest pursuit of modernism on the walls? Only the weaker paintings here speak the same decorative language that evokes through style rather than the



"North of the Tennis House," by Joseph O. Holmes.

lyrical force of form. Next to the stronger works here, the chairs and vases seem like—well, furniture. [John Goodrich]

Through Jan. 22, Schroeder Romero & Shredder, 531 W. 26th St., 212-630-0722.

Wijnanda Deroo: Inside New York Eateries

Devoid of people, Wijnanda Deroo's photographs maintain a solemn calmness, even when set amid the bustle of everyday life. Inside New York Eateries, the Dutch-born, New York-based artist's new show at Robert Mann Gallery, continues her career-long exploration of empty interior spaces.

In the exhibition, iconic culinary destinations of our city (The Russian Tea Room, Yonah Schimmel's Knishes) mingle with the everyday (Papaya Dog, Lexington Candy Shop). Their morgue-like stillness is occasionally appropriate and almost reverential in "Tavern on the Green, Central Park, 2009" and "Relish, 225 Wythe Avenue, Brooklyn, 2009," both of which shut their doors last year.

Deroo's sense of balance is evident in the photographs, though predictable. While no picture is exactly symmetrical, each element is balanced right to left in tone and weight. Shot with close attention to ornament and style, each picture enhances the mood of its subject. Her compositional technique is flawless, but lacking in emotion and depth. The depiction of places to eat and a typically centered vanishing point beg comparison to Leonardo's "The Last Supper."

The photographs operate successfully as documents of a cultural heritage. Dining out is essentially a communal experience, and by portraying these regularly busy establishments bereft of human interaction, Deroo offers a meditation on the city at a moment in which our future remains uncertain.

These documents depict the gamut of culinary institutions—from Delmonico's to a

back-lit-waterfall Chinese place called Panda on Ninth Avenue. The eateries are empty, but strangely inviting. These are cultural touchstones of New York, and staring back at us silently from the pictures they seem to implore occupancy—a warm reassurance that they will be full again. [Nicholas Wells]

Through Jan. 29, Robert Mann Gallery, 210 11th Ave., 212-989-7600.

Joseph O. Holmes: The Urban Wilderness

Joseph O. Holmes is a genius at making the familiar new. Any one of the 12 photographs here warrants many hours of viewing, subtle illuminating details only becoming apparent over time. Having spent his childhood in Pennsylvania often walking in the hills, farms and fields, he discovers similarities to that landscape here in the city. Shooting in a snowy Prospect Park, he sees things the rest of us would probably overlook. In a series where each photograph is more beautiful than the next, "Nethermeadow" is especially glorious, where people with their dogs look like sentinels in the snowy field, their animals like statues. In the distance, snow creates a cloud-like mist in the delicate branches of the trees.

In "The Sledding Hill," the people are mere dots in the white, specs of color clamoring up the hill or sliding down. The gray sky blends with the snow and they seem just transitory and insignificant disturbances in the wild. Nothing human interferes with "The Lake," where light showers from a thick layer of gray clouds onto the still and frozen lake. Almost ominous, "Entering the Nethermeadow" shows a lone figure in the landscape, with no points of reference. He or she might as well be in the wildest, most remote regions of Canada. Ingeniously exposed and thoughtfully composed, his works transport the viewer not only into another world but also into another state of consciousness. [VG]

Through Jan. 23, Jen Bekman Gallery, 6 Spring St., 212-219-0166.



"Les Demoiselles D'Avignon," by Dorothy Morang.