

## YVONNE SÉGUY

GALLERY

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### PRESS RELEASE

The work of contemporary American artist Bob Smith will be on view at the Yvonne Seguy gallery from March 6th to March 30th, 1984.

Bob Smith defines his work as a "voyage in the unknown". With its palpability of atmosphere, personality of light, rich diversity of materials and sheer audacity of conception and execution, each of his environmental boxes is a world in itself, a complete unity of time and space, an invitation to peer in Smith's hypnotic reveries. The viewer becomes some kind of a peeper whose voyeurism the artist both encourages and stimulates by and through his use of glass, mirrors and peep holes. He is led into highly personal and evocative moods emanating from the artist's unpredictable and daring perceptions. These perceptions juxtapose the commonplace with the enigmatic, the familiar with the mythical, the everyday experience with the roamings of the unconscious.

Bob Smith projects his boxes on the basis of a far-reaching spatial environment, a lyricism of mood and a dreamlike quality that are part of a majestic theatricality which achieves its effects through its static sumptuousness, its extremely precise choreography of objects, its symbolic stylization and its operatic use of space.

The use of the frames of the boxes as impressive prosceniums, the carefully devised lighting strategies which emphasize the provocative still-life compositions, the troubling silence and symbolic statuary of the somewhat haunted spaces, the solemn immobility of the objects standing proudly quiet, the use of mirrors to express repetition and similarity; these are all part of the artist's way of evoking his imaginary world, his life experiences, his socio-political viewpoints, his journeys abroad and his recollections sublimated by what he calls "a means of documenting places I've lived in".

From box to box, the viewer never knows what to expect. A beam of light, spurting from an unexpected source, may astonishingly caress an apparently insignificant detail, infusing a mysterious radiance into the physical environment. And the juxtaposition of dissonant elements can suddenly abolish contradictions, such as in Bathing Room, a box in which two opposite styles of decor meet: the upper portion of the box having the marble paneling of a Roman atrium while the lower half is a white tiled bathroom with a cold high-tech surface. In Bob Smith's world, everything relates to everything and the viewer's eyes have to wander around, exploring slowly the dimly lit interiors and connecting the general to the particular and vice versa in order to get at the core of the boxes' enthralling spells.

Every box is a surprise, an amazement and a living poem.