

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

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Late Edition

Today, partly sunny, humid, a late storm, high 97. Tonight, an evening storm, cloudy, low 79. Tomorrow, thunderstorms, possibly severe, high 94. Weather map, Page B16.

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\$2.50



Richard Pettibone

Paintings and Sculpture:
1964-2003

David Nolan
527 West 29th Street
Chelsea
Through Aug. 9

Magical thinking secretly underwrites many types of conceptual art. Sherrie Levine, for example, magically acquired power over certain famous male photographers by copying their works. Miniaturization, Richard Petti-

bone's approach, is a similar way to master otherwise domineering things. Mr. Pettibone (born 1938) has devoted his career to making small reproductions of works by Brancusi, Warhol, Lichtenstein, Stella and other artists whose fame far exceeded his. There is a comical asymmetry between his efforts and theirs, but also something mysterious, as if his were made for a voodoo dollhouse. This show presents about 45 pieces dating from 1964 to 2003.

Assiduous craftsmanship is part of what makes Mr. Petti-

bone's works absorbing. With canvases neatly tacked to wooden stretchers framed by thin wooden strips of the sort popular in the 1970s, his paintings are actually little sculptures. One of his earliest pieces is a baseball card-size construction of a Warhol soup can painting that was supposedly run over by a train, the torn canvas of its damaged lower edge revealing its faithfully detailed underlying stretcher bars.

Many pieces are philosophically provocative. Two three-dimensional works are in the form of di-

minutive Brillo boxes. They miniaturize works by Warhol, of course. But they could represent actual Brillo boxes. How do you know the difference? It's a conundrum.

The gallery's small rear space is filled with copies of works by Marcel Duchamp, including a beautifully painted version of his Cubist masterpiece, "The Bride," and a life-size "Bicycle Wheel." Why Duchamp? He was modern art's great sorcerer, Mr. Pettibone one of his craftiest apprentices.

KEN JOHNSON