

KANTOR GALLERY

PRESS



t h e w e e k e n d e r

By Stephen Dolainski

A BRAND-NEW LOOK

TWO LOCALS COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES ON A WEST HOLLYWOOD ARTS WEEKEND.

Radio, I wondered if Ruscha's 30-year-old work might take on a new relevance today. In a society with a double-digit illiteracy rate, the written word for many people is just a bunch of lines and shapes.

Will wanted to see the Ed Ruscha retrospective down the block, so we turned in that direction. Two young women holding brightly colored placards announcing HEILMAN-C paraded by and handed us fuchsia-colored strips of paper directing us to an exhibition at Gallery Galgano called "Live! Nude! Girls!"

A young, hipster crowd had control of that scene, and the joint was jumpin'. As a commentary on personal freedom in which viewers are invited to see miniature erotic photos but end up viewing themselves, the exhibit seemed pretty gimmicky. But that didn't stop us from posing for a photo with the artist, Gloria Heilman-C, and the gallery owner, a New Yorker dressed in shorts, neither of whom we'd ever met before.

The Ruscha retrospective was at Kantor Gallery, and the atmosphere seemed sedate compared to the hyped commotion we'd just left. Will admires Ruscha because "he combines words, texture, and color into fine art." As we looked at one of the artist's early word paintings,

and suites. What they may lack in size, though, they make up for in personality—all the furnishings are reproductions of Art Deco museum pieces.

It was close to the start of the galleries' open house, so we headed toward the Pacific Design Center area. Every eight weeks or so, on Saturday evenings between five and nine, 16 galleries along Melrose, Robertson, North Almont, and other streets in a walkable section of the city, known as the Avenues of Art and Design, host a group opening.

We started out at George Stern Fine Arts where, between nibbles of grapes and Brie, we admired Maurice Braun's impressionistic *California Landscape* of blue-shadowed mountains. The delight of the evening for me came early on when, in the next block, at Louis Stern Fine Arts, we saw Ana Mercedes Hoyos's voluptuous paintings of bowls of fleshy tropical fruit and huge portraits of African-Colombian women. I saw brilliant life in these canvases; Will saw greeting cards. A crush of well-wishers surrounded the artist, a short, demure Colombian woman.

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