

Alcove Show: It's jarring and disorienting

A merging of diverse stimuli

By LIS BENSLEY

At first glance, the austere, highly personal and seductive drawings of Wes Mills seem strange counterpoints to a Colette Hosmer installation of cast rhesus monkey skulls that confronts rather than beckons.

And how does their work fit beside Susan Wing's three-dimensional filament drawings that push our perceptions of time and space?

Or with the delicate drawings of Marsha Skinner that dance between movement and stillness, color and light?

The mutable imagery of Michael Diaz? Virginia Dehn's explorations of color against line, pattern and texture?

Well, maybe none of the work of these six New Mexico artists suit when taken as a whole.

It seems jarring and disorienting, this merging of such diverse sensual stimuli.

Until you consider where the work takes you, how it invites you to question your inner responses and perceptions. How it might just shake you — just a little — into shifting your own perspectives.

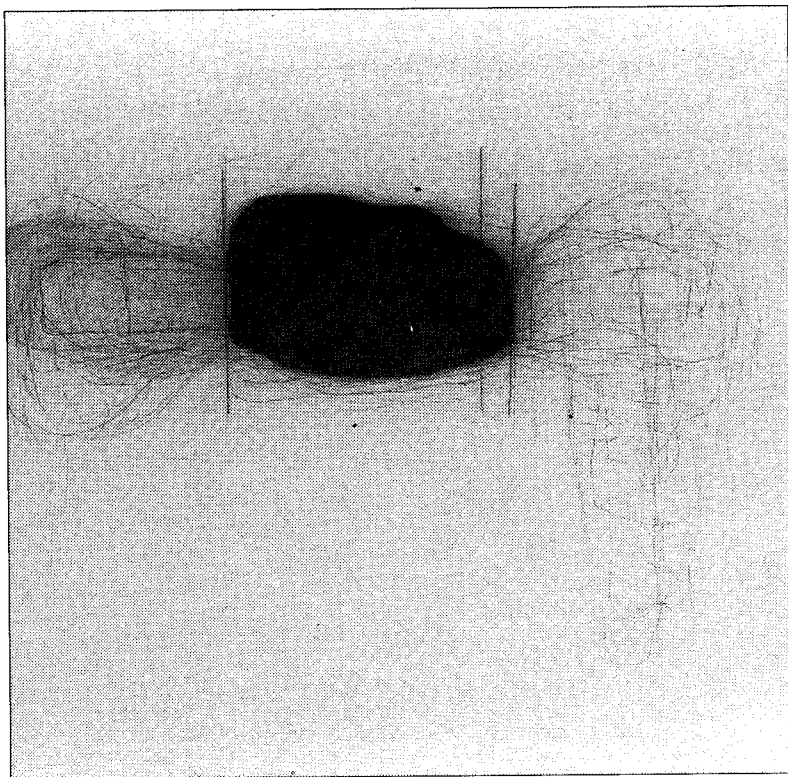
Opening today at the Museum of Fine Arts is a haunting and provocative new *Alcove Show*, featuring the work of Mills, Hosmer, Skinner, Wing, Diaz and Dehn. The show opens with an artist's reception from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and runs through July 2.

Though the work is distinctly different, it shares subjective inner responses to the environment, dreams, ideas or feelings, that, in turn, elicit reciprocal responses in the viewer.

"Each artist engages the viewer in a personal dialogue and confirms the idea that artists cause us to question our own inner responses and perceptions, even if they are not what the artist intended," wrote the show's curator Sandra D'Emilio in the accompanying brochure.

Take the work of Mills, for example. Seemingly rudimentary, almost archetypal drawings, Mills's new work embodies a journey into a highly intimate space.

His style is his own, a particular resolution of internal conflict through intricate graphite marks and ambiguous forms. Mills' tight, small



Tina Murdoch

Anima, 1994 by Wes Mills

DETAILS

WHO/WHAT:
"The Alcove Show"/
Group show

WHEN:
Opening reception
5:30-7:30 p.m. today

WHERE:
Museum of Fine Arts
On the Plaza

INFO:
Through July 2

drawings spin with emotion and intensity.

"My drawings have always dealt with personal relationships between me and my surroundings, my family," Mills said. "Drawing has been a way of capturing the essence and letting it go," Mills said.

More abstracted than his earlier work, this new series, which he leaves untitled, suggests an exploration of the self within the context of the outside world, a curiosity willing to measure chaos against harmony. To look from the inside out.

Here an odd, amorphous mound-like form floats across the surface, seemingly anchored by an edge or sleek, straight mark.

"The mark is almost a connection to reality," Mills explained.

"Like an anchor. It's solid and all this chaos is happening around it." And how can this mark be an anchor? Simply because of the presence of chaos which, in itself, makes the mark valid.

When Mills started this new series last year, his intention

was to get inside. He explained this by using the imagery of drawing a glass.

"If one were to draw a glass, generally one draws the sides," he described. "An outline really. I wanted to go into it, into the inside, then to look at the world from this place." And, in the process, find some sort of balance.

Which justified the need for the connection to the almost rational, straight mark. "I am afraid to let this thing go. I would get so lost."

"These new pieces are getting so close to me not understanding, but discovering a new place that I can reach, if not visually, then conceptually. It's that discovery that I think art should be about."

Using color relationships, line and form as a metaphor for thought and feeling, Dehn opens a door to the internal and the unknown.

Working in series, she seeks to resolve or expand on internal problems, often arising in dreams. "They are great sources of inspiration."

In all her work, she strives for ambiguity — that nebulous field ripe for personal interpretation. "If any painting is successful, it is because it allows the viewer's own creative imagination to rove," she said.

Wing, on the other hand, manipulates perception using dimension in a way that challenges our sense of time and space. In her installations, she uses the common materials of fishing line, eye hooks and filament to create sensual, linear

continued on Page 41

Steina Vasulka, continued from Page 4

a form of visual expression that seemed to suit her well.

"I picked up a camera, and to me it was a natural progression: You hold the violin like this, and you hold a camera like this," she said, crooking her arm in front of her face in a motion she uses for both objects.

"I use the camera as an instrument. It's the only medium available to me; if it wasn't for video, I wouldn't be a visual artist. As I've gotten involved in it, from my perspective as a former musician, there's no other medium where you can compare sound and images in the same way."

In *Pyroglyphs*, the sounds — all of which originate from activities in Joyce's shop — are not organized into tonal scales, yet the structure of the piece is more musical than visual, Vasulka said.

"It is very visual, but I rely on the music for the content, to configurate it together."

Creating *Pyroglyphs* was an evolution, and an enjoyable experience, Vasulka said.

"I came in to take sort of distant pictures, and then I got thrown into the intricacies of blacksmithing and fire, and then to have Tom thrown into it and make it into a collaboration — it was a complete process.

"Nothing was ever planned, and at the same time, casual things became sort of monumental adventures."

Vasulka's other video/audio installations at the CCA include *Borealis*, composed of close-up and manipulated images and sounds of the turbulent waters of Iceland's rivers, streams and surrounding ocean.

Machine Vision was produced using rotating cameras in a closed-circuit environment. ("Don't say anything else about that one," Vasulka said conspiratorially.) The third smaller installation is a collage of her video art from various time periods.

Connie Alderman, continued from Page 26

to follow their heart's desire.

"I say break the mold," she said. "When I started doing this at 48 there was a lot of opposition. My mother wanted me to fit a mold. My ex-husband wanted me to fit a mold. I think people are threatened by non-conformity. I just decided I didn't want to live my life for other people anymore. And I'm doing what I want to do, which makes me very happy."

**Your response to AIDS
SANTA FE CARES
986-3820**