

WEEKEND Arts FINE ARTS LEISURE

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Mike Childs / Anthony Dubovsky

CUE Art Foundation

511 West 25th Street, Chelsea

Through tomorrow

The capriciousness of fame is often part of the display at the CUE Art Foundation, where artists who have never had solo shows in New York are selected for exhibition by artists who presumably have. For this round, the painter Cameron Martin, whose semiabstract paintings have never seemed terribly distinguished, has chosen Mike Childs, an artist of at least equal talent.

Mr. Childs specializes in bright, hard-edge abstractions visibly derived from the grids and curves of modern office buildings; they have just the right amount of cartoonish verve and a good color sense. The downside is that they work too carefully within a known convention and may remind some viewers of Martha Diamond's more Expressionistic takes on urban architecture.

The larger space is filled with the small, romantic paintings of Anthony Dubovsky of San Francisco, who was selected by the painter Christopher Brown, also of San Francisco. If Mr. Brown is an artist whose dexterity and industry have never coalesced into a style to call his own, Mr. Dubovsky, who is about 60, has suavely parlayed a restless love of painting and culture into something that passes for one.

Working in flurries of quick brushstrokes and delicate smudges of thin, often subdued colors on little squares of cardboard and Masonite, Mr. Dubovsky specializes in landscapes, riverscapes and portraits. His work evinces a debt to Vuillard and Whistler; pays homage to and sometimes borrow motifs from Chinese painting, Philip Guston, Robert Henri, Degas, Boudin and Van Ruisdael; and includes portraits of Eubie Blake, Gina Lollobrigida and Big Joe Williams. There is an underlying sentimentality and preciousness to these far-flung enthusiasms that can wear thin over the course of the 98 paintings here. They constitute a pleasure, albeit a guilty one.

ROBERTA SMITH



Anthony Dubovsky's "After Kertesz" (1997) at CUE