

## MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

### BLAKE RAYNE

#### MODEL

March 15, 1996

An exhibition by Blake Rayne will be on view at Greene Naftali Gallery beginning March 15th and will continue through May 5th, 1996. This exhibition marks the second presentation of his work in New York; previously his work was shown with Scott Lyall at John Good Gallery in the spring of 1994. The artist lives and works in New York City.

The 1994 exhibition, entitled *Sleepyhead*, took its name from the rock band, which is made up of the four individuals depicted in the paintings. Making reference to a genre of group portraiture, the paintings employ a color schema and the band members' physiognomic characteristics to investigate the pictorial and psychological codes that simultaneously unite and distinguish individuals as units in a painted group. The four paintings, each representing a central figure flanked by two incomplete figures, were executed on stretchers of the same proportions but with increasing overall dimensions and were visually and spatially related by a gray horizontal band painted across the four gallery walls. By severing the portrait group and placing the paintings across the gallery's architecture, the pictorial elements are projected out of frame and figure the viewing space. A soundtrack of the gallery doorbell traveled around the walls, occasionally interrupted with a low bass sound designed to resonate in the viewer's body, representing a third coding of the viewing experience, thus further engaging the viewer's visual and tactile/spatial senses.

Like the *Sleepyhead* project, the compositional elements of the five paintings in the current exhibition are multiplied across the Greene Naftali gallery space and are figured by a set of objects. The show includes five oil on canvas paintings, a cubic object, a wall painting, the surface marking of the gallery column, and an exhibition catalogue.

The paintings are derived from photographs of people, plants and an architectural model. The model itself is absent from the exhibition, but is represented as an imaginary perspectival space in the paintings and as a photographic model in the catalogue documenting an exhibition of four other artists. The installation draws a relation between the model, the paintings, the gallery's viewing space, and the cubic object to propose a visual and spatial experience that continuously reconfigures these elements and the viewer's relation to them.

It is in the paintings that the layering of this project's many frames is most dense. Compositional elements in the paintings (the people and plants, the model and its walls, floors and doorways) are connected with the set of objects (physical and printed/photographic), shifting a pictorial space onto the literal one of viewing. If depicting the model as an imaginary perspectival space refers to an illusionistic figural painting for which the painted surface must be transparent, then painting its inflated wall holds the image in a necessary relation to the material surface of the picture, sensible in moments of glare and flat opacity.