

The 20th Century, Two Viewpoints in Sculpture and Collage

By WILLIAM ZIMMER

AT the end of a century, the impulse is to look back to the beginning, and compare art then and now. The changes in the 20th century have, of course, been enormous, but some things have stayed the same.

In 1900 the most revolutionary sculptor was Rodin, with his absorption in the human body emerging from abstract amorphous masses. The persistent, though sometimes oblique presence of the body is still a vital concern of many sculptors. In Connecticut, Eve Ingalls, heretofore known as an abstract painter whose work referred to nature, has begun to mine this sculptural territory.

Perhaps it is for her switch to sculpture that Art/Place, the cooperative gallery in Southport, has named the Woodbridge artist, "Artist of the Year." It might be presumptuous to confer such a title when the year has barely begun, but the recognition signals the ambition in Ms. Ingalls's achievement: She is attempting to arrive at the ideal of merging the self and the world.

She calls the exhibition, "Between Body and Earth," and begins her statement accompanying the show by disclosing that, "Fifteen summers in a remote 2.3 million acre Western wilderness has led me to probe various aspects of the bond between the body and the land."

A cursory glance at the various pieces in the exhibition will remind the viewer of Western geology, the capricious-looking land masses formed by layers of sediment over an eon.

But graphic representation is far from Ms. Ingalls's aim. Process is key: in short, she presses latex sacks filled with hydrocal, a lightweight plaster, against areas of her body, say, on her shoulder. She continually refers to "the edge of my body." When the material hardens it bears the impression of the attachment. Usually many similar elements are painted and arranged in a modular fashion to form a sculpture.

The largest work at Art/Place, "Being From Here," is essentially an installation that invites one to walk around and through it. The use of repeated elements is closely associated with Minimal artists like Sol LeWitt, 1997's "Artist of the Year." "Being in the Thick of Things"



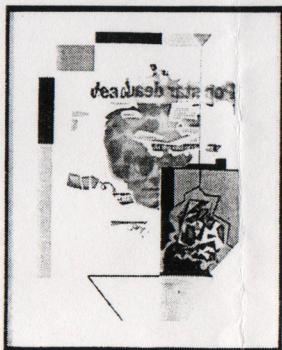
"Reverse Collage No. 10," above, and "Reverse Collage No. 13" are among the works by D. Dominick Lombardi now at the Art/Ex Gallery.

conjures up another form of life; with hydrocal forms crammed together on a steel incline, it may remind viewers of so many baby seals struggling to reach land.

"Touching Over There" with elements stacked on an 11-foot pole recalls one of the milestones of 20th century, the zig-zag "Endless Column" of Brancusi, who once worked for Rodin. But Ms. Ingalls's version is irrepressibly organic.

Charming on a small scale are the two small, natural clay "Fist Fulls" that bear the marks of squeezing fingers, while the forms in the large wall installation, "Touching Wind," might be outstretched arms that not only touch the wind but also are subtly twisted by it.

Accompanying the sculptures are intaglio prints on embossed handmade paper. The forms on many of them recall a bent knee and the adjacent area of calf and thigh. Thus they have an inborn tension or alacri-



ty betrayed in titles like, "Knees Trying to Hold On," and "Leaning Into the World."

The Art/Ex Gallery of the Stam-

An Eve Ingalls show in Southport and D. Dominick Lombardi in Stamford.

ford Museum and Nature Center is developing into an alluring showcase for local art talent. Showing there now is **D. Dominick Lombardi**, of Valhalla, N.Y. who also takes viewers back to the beginning of the century with his "Reverse Collages."

It can be argued that collage has been the most important, certainly the most sweeping, development in art over the course of the century. It is a pliable medium that can be easily understood and often has the stunning effect of uniting many disparate phenomena simply through the abutting placement of scissored elements.

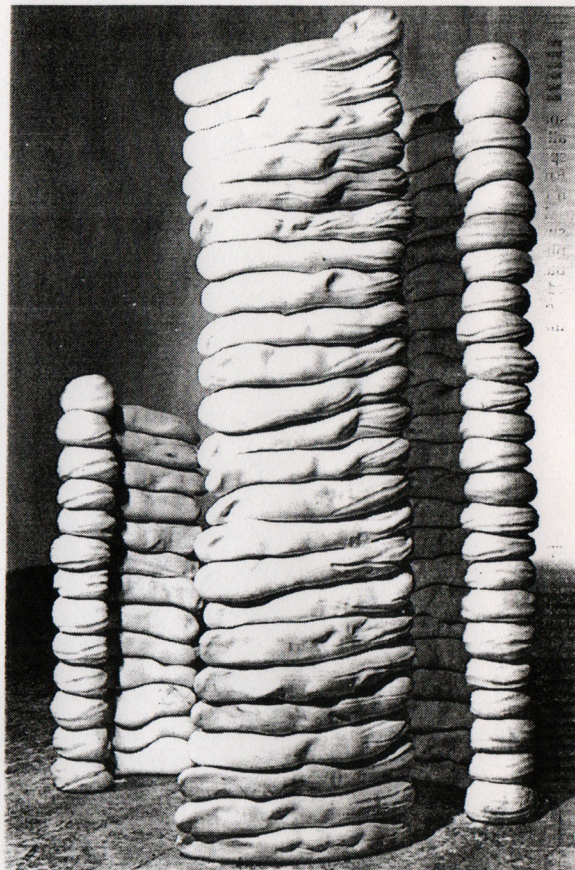
Mr. Lombardi has glued his materials, most often yellowed newspaper articles and advertisements, to sheets of plexiglass, and the way light strikes his surfaces often means that printing on both the front and the back of the article can be read.

That this often causes a confusion and a babel of language is part of Mr. Lombardi's point. The 20th century is full of heady contradictions and a compounding of high and low elements.

Mr. Lombardi is deliberately alluding to another uniquely 20th century practice, the Surrealist game of "exquisite corpse," in which words and images combine by chance in often startling ways.

The artist maintains that the page layout of any major newspaper today is something like a ready-made "exquisite corpse" simply because of the jumble of events that get reported on a normal day: the mixture gets even headier when advertisements come into play.

The painted components of these collages are usually derived from impassive motifs associated with the emblematic art of the century, geometric abstraction; they allude to a high-mindedness that is often challenged by the banality or tedium of



"Being From Here" by Eve Ingalls, 1997, hydrocal and pigment. An installation that invites one to walk around and through it.

the collage element, as with "Violence Explodes, the headline in "Reverse Collage No. 10."

The formal shape, the outline irrespective of content, of the collaged part often engages in formal byplay with the painted parts.

Viewers will notice that some of Mr. Lombardi's collage material goes way back, as if he has been collecting an archive of newsprint for decades. Andy Warhol's image along with the headline "Pop Star

Dead" on "Reverse Collage No. 13" is a reminder that the exaltation of triviality can sometimes beguile. Mr. Lombardi achieves this in his own way.

The works of Eve Ingalls can be seen at Art/Place in Southport through Feb. 1, while those of D. Dominick Lombardi will remain at the Art/Ex Gallery of the Stamford Museum and Nature Center through Friday.