

FLASH ART
OCTOBER '87

PO MASTERS

AIMEE RANKIN

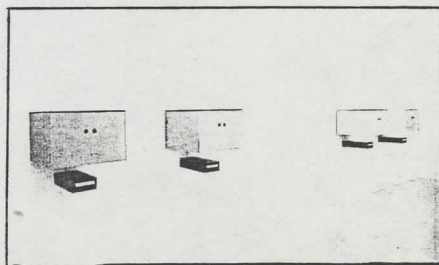
POSTMASTERS

Aimee Rankin has created the absence of spectacle in her new works, where the only spectacle is the spectator as voyeur, peeping into pseudo-neo-geo boxes that attempt a codification of emotional states where all of the accoutrements of love converge. There is Cupid's pop music, that opium for the masses, "The Man That Got Away," "Mack the Knife," "Jungle Love," "You Belong to Me," etc., for which one must plug oneself in with headphones. And there is The Bed, beds of eggshell, rose petals razor blades, fire crackers, etc. Rankin also uses art historical and various kitschy *objets trouvés* such as small robots, plastic chocolates, plastic feces, sharks' embryos and motorized dildos.

This would seem to be the new barbarellism/barbarism for the neo-generation of saturation. Here, Rankin presents thirteen scenarios of codified emotional states relating to love—Attraction, Perversity, Suffocation, Fury, Sex, Cruelty, Bliss—to name a few. From there, Rankin seems to work by association, constructing her fantastical stages where nothing can occur. Mirrors are placed to reflect the eyes of the voyeur, peeping self-consciously in on this impass of coded desire.

The taxonomy of emotional states is a particularly suspect notion, especially when it is coupled with the violence of nostalgia. A nostalgia regarding desire and emotions from which Rankin attempts to seduce the spectator into the ambivalent and erotic zone of Beyond the Pleasure Principle. More interesting by far would be for Rankin to give up her ideas of control and the obvious "Fort-Da" disappointments, and to produce these ecstatic scenarios on a grander, operatic scale where spectacle and set design would merge. We have had enough of Wilson's tasteful postmodernism and the effete set designs of the Met—perhaps an injection of Rankin's *Ecstasy* would be just the cure.

Shaun Caley



AIMEE RANKIN, "ECSTASY" SERIES, 1987.
INSTALLATION VIEW. 17" x 24" x 24" (EACH BOX).

POSTMASTERS GALLERY • 66 AVENUE A • NYC 10009 • 212/4775630