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Jane Regan Jane Gilmor
N.A.M.E. Gallery Chicago

By Nancy Hamel

Moving from the work of Jane Regan to that of Jane Gilmor is an abrupt transition. Regan uses a fairly conventional manner while Gilmor transforms her space into a complete environment. Gilmor's obsession with ancient myth and allegory is transferred in her work into fascinating photo and video installations, as well as into film and books. She creates shrine and altar installations by combining metal repoussé (patterns formed in relief by hammering on the reverse side) with video, film and photo documents of her ritual performance works in Greece, Turkey and Egypt. A recurrent theme in Gilmor's work is male/female interaction and role-playing. The artist uses animal images to parody our sex-related roles in society. An image she uses repeatedly is on she terms the "Great Goddess" ---a figure combining a woman's body with a cat's head. Small cut-out females/cat figures are applied to the metal shrines and altars which house video performances; one of the films features performers dressed as this figure.

Gilmor's attention to detail is a constant delight, from the pillars which are covered to look like ancient Greek or Roman pillars to the cutouts of the cat figures applied to the floor. Her work is clearly very personal and reflects her belief that through allegorical representations, art can make meaning of one's experiences. This kind of work often leaves the viewer feeling as if he or she has missed the point or intruded into the artist's private thoughts and feelings. Fortunately this is not the case with Gilmor's work, which welcomes the viewer to share her obsession and provides enough information so that a level of understanding and appreciation is easily reached.