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ART REVIEWS/Phyllis Braff

The Intellectual Translated Into the Visual

'Visual Ideas: Conceptual Works I'

*Nese Alpan Gallery, 1499 Old Northern Boulevard, Roslyn. Through Feb. 4.
484-7238.*

Conceptual art can stretch the senses by combining overt intellectual content with assertive visual forms. This effective presentation concentrates on examples by three widely respected Long Island artists.

The pieces by Chris Coffin annex the universal fascination with weather and use its documentation as a basis for ideas that consider sequence, time and memory. One particularly successful project groups small black charts bearing multiple brilliantly colored lines that track meteorological details of storms in 1969 and 1998. Thoroughly compelling, these graphic components have an abstract resonance that interacts with the mental engagement in statistical interpretation.

Mr. Coffin's fondness for progression and systematization comes across nicely, too, in his sequential alignment of handsomely shaped and etched glass containers, each half-filled with Atlantic Ocean water and inscribed with the name of a hurricane that occurred in the last 30 years. Turbulence may be part of the content, but the harmonious control is admirably soothing. The artist's two videos recording the surf are also notable additions, especially because of the mesmerizing way they transform reality into sequences of generalized rhythms.

Barbara Roux likes to dramatize forest components in her installation pieces, which frequently activate the space beyond their specific physical dimensions. The example here, based on branches protruding from the gallery walls, incorporates strong shadow images that raise thoughts about illusions and hints rather gently at Ms. Roux's interest in the friction between human concerns and the unspoiled wilderness. She makes her point somewhat more strongly in a photograph of an elaborately framed mirror lying on a forest floor to capture the unseen sky and treetops.

Most visitors think first of magic and fantasy when they discover the busy color and crowded dynamics of Seung Lee's installation "Modern Forest." Beyond the scores of suspended bugs wrapped in wax-like teardrops, however, vividly painted old circuit boards and found-object constructions deliver a message about waste. They also point to a contrast between technology's precision and art's improvisation.