

Freedman (who later photographed New York cops on the job) is sympathetic but clear-eyed. Some of the toughest yet most tender focus on elephants—chained at the foot, crammed into trucks barely large enough for their enormous bulk. Here, they're unsung heroes. Through March 9. (Higher Pictures, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 212-249-6100.)

Short List

PHILIP GUSTON: McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-688-5951. Opens March 2. **ROSY KEYSER:** Blum, 20 W. 57th St. 212-244-6055. Opens Feb. 28. **ALVIN LUCIER:** Tilton, 8 E. 76th St. 212-737-2221. Through March 9. **JOHN MCCLAUGHLIN:** Van Doren Waxter, 23 E. 73rd St. 212-445-0444. Through April 20. **A. R. PENCK:** Werner, 4 E. 77th St. 212-988-1623. Through March 8. **ANDRA URSUTA:** Venus Over Manhattan, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 212-980-0700. Through March 30. **"MARCEL DUCHAMP'S 'NUDE DESCENDING A STAIRCASE': AN HOMAGE":** Naumann, 24 W. 57th St. 212-582-3201. Through March 29. **"TRIESTE":** Boesky, 118 E. 64th St. 212-680-9889. Opens March 2.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

ANDY FREEBERG

Following a memorable series on the receptionists at Chelsea galleries, and another on international art fairs, Freeberg continues his witty exploration of the art world with photographs of the elderly women who keep watch on paintings and sculpture in Russian museums. The women—all but one perched on chairs and wearing practical shoes, sweaters, and scarves—are seen alongside the work they're guarding and most of them look as incongruous in their surroundings as a Duane Hanson sculpture of housewives. But some of the guardians have come to resemble the art works they guard, notably the straight-faced matron sitting next to a vitrine of mummy masks. Through March 2. (Meislin, 534 W. 24th St. 212-627-2552.)

JOHN MANN AND BREA SOUDERS

Two photographers who take a playful approach to their medium make an entertaining pair. Mann turns colorful maps and globes into sly tabletop sculptures, which he photographs as if they were features of a miniaturized landscape: a road sign, a billboard, a spiralling off-ramp. His touch is light and poetic, with echoes of Joseph Cornell, and a similar blend of sophistication and childlike pleasure in materials. Souders scatters snippets of old negatives on shiny sheets of acetate, then photographs them as random collages—bright shards of color, some as wispy as blades of cut grass. Save for a few recognizable images, these are jazzy abstractions, funny and fresh. Through March 2. (Cooney, 508 W. 26th St. 212-255-8158.)

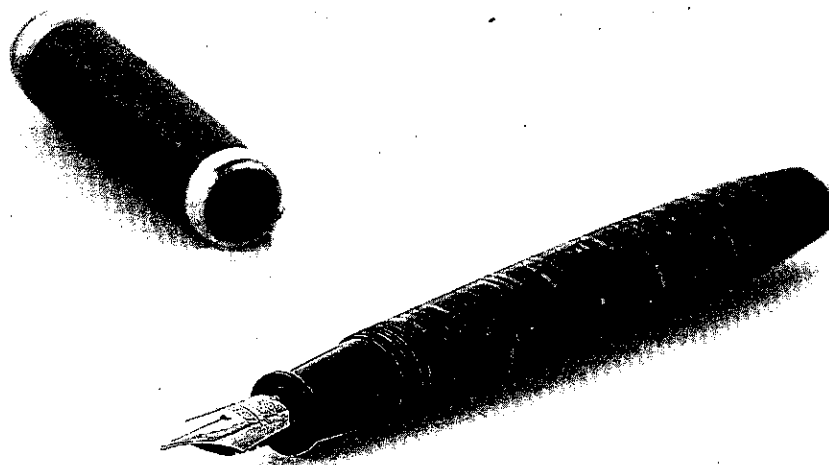
"THE BOOK LOVERS"

Is a novel still a novel if it was conceived as an art work? Ponder that question while browsing this fascinating collection of some hundred and thirty volumes by artists ranging from Carl Andre to Andy Warhol, as well as several pieces based on books. Julia Weist (an artist, librarian, and the author of the novel "Sexy Librarian") contributes two piles of dust that take the phrase "pulp fiction" literally. A riveting documentary on Justine Frank, a Jewish-Belgian author and artist active in the nineteen-thirties, turns out to be a fictional work by the contemporary Israeli artist Roe Rosen. Through March 9. (EFA Project Space, 323 W. 39th St. 212-563-5855.)

Short List

JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT: Gagolian, 555 W. 24th St. 212-741-1111. Through April 6. **CORA COHEN:** Guided by Invoices, 558 W. 21st St. 917-226-3851. Through March 16. **MARK DION:** Bonakdar, 521 W. 21st St. 212-414-4144. Opens Feb. 28. **SHANNON EBNER:** WallSpace, 619 W. 27th St. 212-594-9478. Through March 23. **LUCIANO FABRO, JANNIS KOUNELLIS, AND MARIO MERZ:** Galerie Lelong, 528 W. 26th St. 212-315-0470. Through March 30. **BARKLEY L. HENDRICKS:** Shainman,

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