

INDEPENDENT

CULTURE & ARTS

Wonderful Find

A wonderful find almost lost in one of the rear galleries are two small drawings done in oil and pencil by Melissa Stern. The drawings are almost lost, since the room features several pieces of her fanciful sculpture. *Birthday Girl* depicts a rather crudely-drawn female figure in a ballet dress with a green cone on her head. In the background behind the figure is a sophisticated geometric abstraction, on a gray field which could be a blackboard covered with chalk dust. The inscribed drawing of the tutu enhances the graphic quality. As one enters the Benson Gallery to the left of the desk are more examples of Stern's sculpture and in fired clay is the same *Birthday Girl*, this time with a dark gray plastic cone on her head and standing in a childlike attitude, one foot on top of the other.

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Section II



Melissa Stern, of Shelter Island and New York, shows her work in the Elaine Benson Gallery's "New Generation" exhibit.



By Donald Kennedy

The Elaine Benson Gallery opened with a tribute to the newer artists of the region, in keeping with Benson's long tradition of fairness, and the knowledge that we all were young once and each of us needed a first opportunity to display our talents. This is a

chance for a collector to be able to select an unknown, and at the same time to wonder if, in the choosing, this could be a young Willem de Kooning or David Smith.

The Benson has incorporated photography, sculpture, and ceramics, as well as painting. In the central courtyard are Marc Berlet's welded steel

sculptures. Berlet acknowledges his affinity to the work of Marino Marini. But while Marini worked in plaster and bronze with rounded forms, this work is in steel diamond plate, the rounded form reduced to planes and contrapuntal angularity. The surfaces, too stark for Berlet's taste, have become the surfaces as a matrix for painting, the in-

corporation of painting as sculptural surfaces. Berlet's own.

Before entering the garden courtyard is a sculpture by Mary Preminger — *Icarus*, cast bronze, 1992. Here is a visual depiction of the traditional Greek myth of Icarus, the man who didn't heed the wisdom of his father when they

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