

A Package With More Than Meets the Eye

ART REVIEWS

By **DAVID PAGEL**
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

At the Post gallery, a solo show by **Jason Rogenes** and a group exhibition titled "Space Space" strike just the right balance between levity and gravity. Casual, offhand and unpretentious, this fine pair of exhibitions emphasizes potential.

Its paintings, sculptures, photographs and drawings adapt to whatever level of seriousness a viewer brings to them. For example, Rogenes' installation in the upstairs gallery can be seen as a grim meditation on modern life's tenuousness or as a giddy celebration of the sci-fi theatrics of our disposable culture.

Either way, "Project 5.09e" consists of a fairly symmetrical tower of polystyrene packaging material, stacked as if it's a contemporary

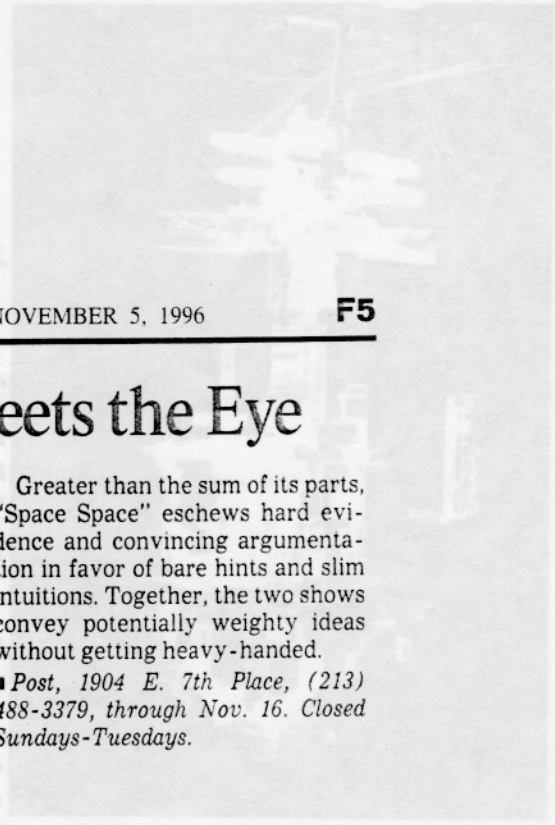
model of ancient Babel's mythical monument to chaos. Lighted by eight fluorescent tubes hanging unevenly from the silver ceiling, this lightweight structure stands in a room whose walls and floor are completely covered with a layer of neatly taped cardboard.

Flagrantly fake, like a prop for a summer camp skit, Rogenes' installation is just a little too eerie to be dismissed as harmless diversion. Although its throwaway materials undercut overly serious interpretations, the fact that polystyrene will probably outlast bronze gives the work a menacing undercurrent.

Likewise, the group show downstairs would be all fun and games if it weren't for its conspiratorial undertow. Organized and beautifully installed by Santa Barbara art dealer Steve Hartzog, these 15 pieces by Rogenes, **Chris Wilder**, **Halsey Rodman**, **Carlos Mollura**, **Andrea Bowers** and **Adam Ross** give physical form to the lurking suspicion that there's more to the world than we think.

Greater than the sum of its parts, "Space Space" eschews hard evidence and convincing argumentation in favor of bare hints and slim intuitions. Together, the two shows convey potentially weighty ideas without getting heavy-handed.

■ *Post*, 1904 E. 7th Place, (213) 488-3379, through Nov. 16. Closed Sundays-Tuesdays.



Jason Rogenes
Project 5.09e
Polystyrene, fluorescent tubes, cardboard, and painted tape
120" x 120" x 54" (installed with)