

Art

Irony Found in Dismembered Landscapes

■ ART REVIEW

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In the art world, as in any other subculture, certain themes are ubiquitous at certain moments. Right now, the collective myth of Nature is one of them—as in Jennifer Pastor's hyperbolic sculptures "The Four Seasons," Matthew Barney's perverse imagery of utopias and Elizabeth Bryant's artfully dismembered landscapes—the latter at Gallery LASCA.

Though Bryant's work is less ambitious than the grand, indeed operatic creations of Pastor or Barney and trades on irony where they utterly escrow it, she is

likewise interested in how we structure the idea of paradise or, conversely, idealize chaos.

To that end, she takes what look to be vintage travel posters or calendar giveaways featuring sigh-worthy vistas chock-full of verdant ponds, woodland waterfalls, alpine blossoms, etc., mounts them on canvas and then cuts into them the ground plans for historic European gardens.

Luckily, the seductiveness of the objects, with their peek-a-boo, doily-like passages, goes a long way toward compensating for the obviousness of it all.

The landscapes may be too predictably kitschy to have much of an effect, but not so the patterns of the formal gardens, which alternately resemble snowflakes, bolts of rococo wallpaper, religious symbols and medical visualizations. Insinuating themselves into the very texture of the image, these erase the distinctions between the diagram's flatness and the photograph's perspectival space.

BE THERE

Gallery LASCA, 3630 Wilshire Blvd., (213) 381-1525, through June 28. Closed Sunday and Monday.