

# loops, swirls and scrapings

LAYERED LOOK AND COLLAGES TAKE CENTER STAGE AT STEVENSON GALLERY

By Robert L. Pincus  
ART CRITIC

It's hard to know what a title like "Deconstructing Mr. G" means. But why care, when the painting that carries this title charms the eye so deftly?

This image of Hilary Baker's, part of her solo exhibition at the R.B. Stevenson Gallery, is made on mylar and sports a wonderful-looking purple. Not one of those sublime sunset purples, but a color you'd see on a snappy blouse or a cartoon.

Perhaps the painting began as a portrait of this Mr. G, which progressively dissolved into handsome loops and swirls. And perhaps that's where the "deconstructing" comes in. At any rate, the hue anchors the picture, which resembles a landscape: blue sky above, yellow earth below. The pur-

ple mass hugs the horizon.

Some of Baker's compositions, whether acrylic on mylar or gouache on paper, take nature as a point of departure. Chosen subjects, like a bee in black surrounded by wood-grain effect, look heavily stylized instead of natural. Other forms look as if they had their genesis in decorative objects from a bygone decade.

This solo exhibition of Baker's, who lives in Pacific Palisades, is her first in a decade. You have to wonder why she hasn't had more, given the stylish energy in the work.

#### DATEBOOK

"Wealth Tracks," new paintings by Hilary Baker; "Cultural Salvage," collages by Nana Gregory

Through Dec. 22  
R.B. Stevenson  
Gallery, 2400 Kettner  
Blvd., Middletown

Free;  
(619) 595-0558



R.B. Stevenson Gallery

Hilary Baker (top) paints on both sides of her mylar surfaces to achieve the layered effects she does in paintings like "Deconstructing Mr. G."