

DETAILS

SUMMER 1985

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ART AND ABOUT

All of us have noticed in the past that ideas tend to happen at the same time. This sounds rather ambiguous, so to explain I'll just say that trends are in the air. An artist who is thinking about bomb art in Paris, for instance, has a "creative twin" in New York. The double is making explosive bomb art, too. It's in the air, the same kind of thinking. Trends, fashions, fads are propitious, timely. People tend to think of the same kinds of things at the same time; usually there is no copying like the innovators like to believe.

It has happened once again, although I'm not sure if it's going to be exactly a fad. At the **Charles Cowles Gallery**, 420 West Broadway, and at the **Hal Bromm Gallery**, 90 West Broadway, two artists, **Charles Arnoldi** and **Russell Sharon** (respectively) have made chain saw art. Yes, it happened. Neither of them lives in New York, so they couldn't have copied each other. I don't think the galleries got together to discuss this (or did they?). Maybe they wanted to start a rash of chain saw art. The idea intrigues me, I guess, because I liked *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* so much.

Arnoldi's work at the Cowles Gallery consists of layered sheets of plywood that are manipulated both by paint and by the "application" of the chain saw to and into the surface. This artist is a California guy, and this is his first one-man show in New York. Russell Sharon at Hal Bromm was working in Minnesota with fallen poplar trees and also with the trunks of elms, those left stripped of life and leaves when struck by Dutch Elm disease. This seems like a good idea, especially if you know what a field of these dead trees looks like. It's really a sad sight and his sculptures (as seen in the photos) make it less so. In the press releases of both artists one would expect the word "destruction" to be featured rather heavily and it is.

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