

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

KENNETH BAKER *Galleries*

Reichman and Sherwood at Anglim: San Francisco painter Brett Reichman's show at Paule Anglim might offend as many visitors as it amuses, but the technical brilliance of his work ought to impress everyone who sees it firsthand.

Reichman has painted almost photographically detailed visions obliquely rendering a certain facet of male sexuality — bigger-than-life sensations specific to phallic excitement. His pictures take lubricious fantasy to the point of ridicule, without losing completely a quotient of psychological truth.

Yet he never really shows us anything obscene. Instead, more often than not, we get hands massaging serpentine

bundles of wrinkled fabric, typically under raking colored light that creates a kaleidoscopic play of tinted contours.

Few contemporary painters can stand comparison with Salvador Dali (1904-1989) at his early best, but Reichman recalls him both by his handling of color and illusion and by the lurid comedy they share.

But Reichman seems to have motives more complex than inventing gay male surrealism. (Some might argue that Dali also got there first, in spite of what *he* may have thought.) Reichman's onanistic motifs might symbolize a strain of self-doubt that afflicts countless painters, no matter their sexual orientation.

Reichman has evidently noticed how frequently in premodern European painting the coursing of posh clothing and other drapery can

communicate the unutterable and unpicturable — the very scandal of embodiment itself — to the suggestible mind. He unmasks that tradition, to a point, in distinctly contemporary terms.



Gallery Paule Anglim

“Pink Thing” (2010), oil and egg tempera on canvas over wood, by Brett Reichman.

Brett Reichman: Simulations: Paintings. **Katherine Sherwood: Healers From the Yelling Clinic:** Mixed-media constructions. Through Sept 25. Gallery Paule Anglim, 14 Geary St., S.F. (415) 433-2710. www.gallerypauleanglim.com.