

Galleries

TODD BIENVENU

Through May 14. *yours mine & ours*,
54 Eldridge Street, Manhattan;
646-912-9970,
yoursmineandoursgallery.com.

Todd Bienvenu paints both oil and acrylic in a faux-naïf style of

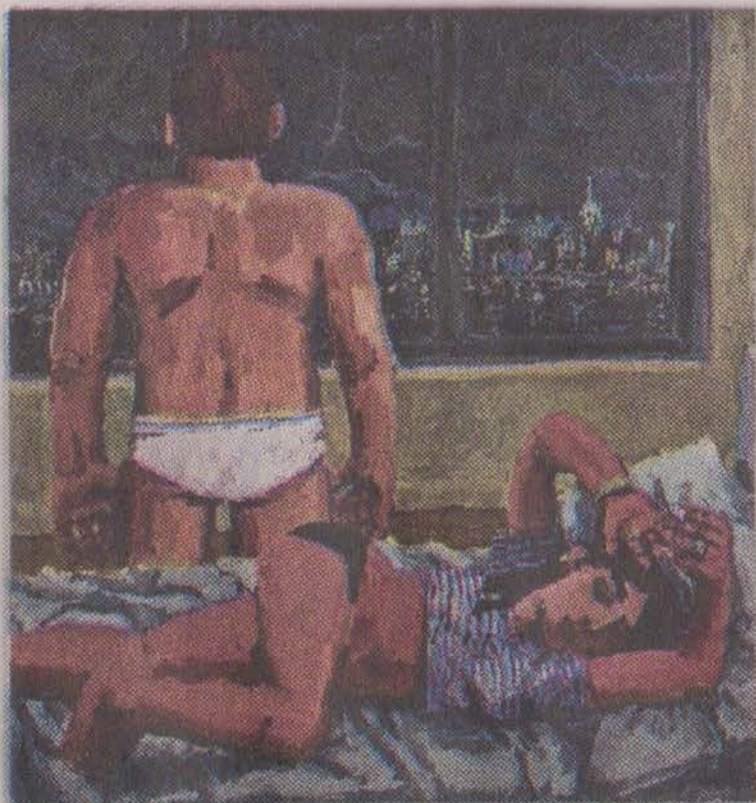
broad approximate strokes, bright high-contrast colors and heavy impasto. Like his technique, his subjects — including, in the current show, big feet, rear ends and a plastic bag blown against a chain-link fence — take full account of the cheap disposability of figurative images in the internet age. But there's a lot

more underneath them.

There's painterly skill, as in the New York skyline in "Room With a View," a perfectly pitched riff on dentist-office photo-realism with soupy, children's-book clouds. There's the display of self-consciousness every good painting needs these days. See "Watersports," which shows 20 figures cavorting in and around a squarish swimming pool, with its color wheel for a beach ball, its double entendre for a title, and its reference to Géricault's "The Raft of the Medusa."

Most important, there's a love of paint in itself so clear and contagious that it almost makes all the figuration look like a pretext. Examine the naked back in "Room With a View," dashed off in a patchwork of brown, pink and brick-red; the squiggly water in "Watersports"; or "Thank You," a portrait of a plastic shopping bag whose layers of crisscrossing strokes have the methodical space-covering glee of papier-mâché.

WILL HEINRICH



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