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Richard Artschwager: Interactions

Nolan/Eckman

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A sly but unassuming presence on the New York scene for nearly 50 years, Richard Artschwager wields his talents in a humorously deadpan way that smacks more than faintly of nonchalance. A painter, sculptor, photographer and carpenter, he has, over the years, left very few subjects undrawn, unpainted or unwrought.

His focus in these mostly black-and-white drawings, using charcoal and pasted paper, is roads and highways. Some roll neat and empty out to the horizon in New Mexico, where he spent much of his childhood; a couple of more urban roads, seen from high up, are tied in intricate patterns (one in a jokey knot). And there's a rendition of a curving four-lane highway in rich, earthy browns with touches of blue, backed by a lovely haze of sky between two hills.

A few other subjects come into play: part of a bucket on a floor; a line of leaning guys; two young people facing each other across a round table, his back concealing most of her. Even one of Mr. Artschwager's famous blips is here, in a drawing, although they were three-dimensional when he placed them, years ago, in hard-to-find spots on downtown walls. This one's more assertive, masquerading as "Untitled (Blue Concentric)," a softish pink lozenge in charcoal and pastel with several perimeters of brightly contrasting neon color.

His thoughts never far from furniture, Mr. Artschwager also shows two outsize chairs, framed bentwood-style in red oak, with seats of spotted cowhide. Their broad backs seem intricately grained, but on close inspection the graining becomes faux, composed of delicate but hard-to-read imagery. His key may be low, but he is high on style and wit.

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