

DAVID NOLAN **NEW YORK**

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“Richard Artschwager and Joe Zucker,” The New York Times, November 28, 1997

Richard Artschwager and Joe Zucker

*Nolan/Eckman Gallery
560 Broadway, at Prince Street
SoHo
Through Dec. 20*

Two of the most intriguing minds in contemporary art are represented here in separate, small shows.

Richard Artschwager presents nine new charcoal drawings. In several, a thin schematic line and pale shading describe rooms in each of which precisely six items are distributed. In a surrealistically angled corner, for example, a rug, a door, a window, a picture frame, a table and a towel are all attached to the walls as though in an art gallery.

In other drawings, he copied newspaper photographs of disaster aftermaths, like a flooded library or a house crushed by a tornado-tossed tree. These drawings seem unprepossessing at first, but their delicate precision and deadpan mood grow on you.

Joe Zucker's show revolves around “Jolly Roger,” a big, cartoony picture of a pirate's flag flapping in the breeze, which he made in 1978 by applying wads of resin-soaked cotton to canvas, mosaic style. He devoted other, related works to the history of cotton, here represented in painted and photographic studies of such subjects as a boll weevil, a slave ship or the plantation where Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin.

As does Mr. Artschwager, Mr. Zucker makes art according to his own offbeat rules.

KEN JOHNSON
