

IN THE GALLERIES

NOW, VOYAGER

Discovering new physical and spiritual dimensions.

Edited by Jed Perl

Christopher Lucas is a young man with a lot of ideas about making art and being an artist. His recent show, entitled "Passage," included painting,



Lucian Freud's *Bella*.

sculpture, and collage, all of it professing to lead the viewer on a spiritual voyage between the material and higher realms. Our voyage was to be abetted by both a sled and a sailboat, constructed of smoothly molded poplar varnished to a sheen—immaculate carpentry. A meditation panel in flat-painted blocks of slightly morose colors (like mustard

and fuchsia) had a format and title (*Video Quest*) suggesting the replacement of your television set, unless you already happen to be watching Shirley MacLaine's "Inner Workout." Lucas's paintings and collages tend toward the geometric severity of constructivism, elaborated by patches of sewn fabric or protruding knobs or dowels. Without the titles and the long quotes in the gallery handout you might think yourself at just another fiddling-with-abstraction impasse instead of in a spiritual playground. The most engaging piece here was the *Chakra Slide*, a full-scale children's slide, its runway adorned with emblems drawn from Eastern philosophy and decals of little lambs.

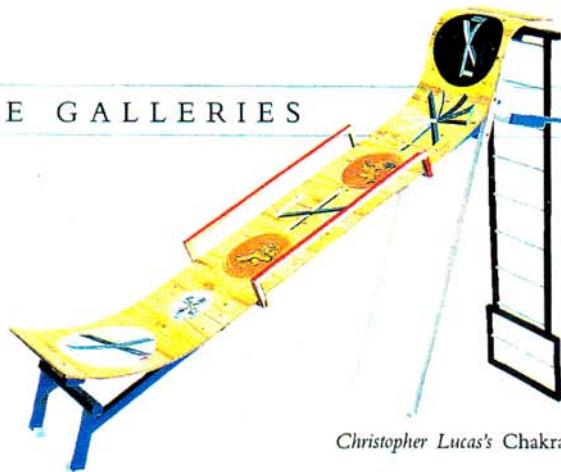
This elegant toy presents an odd but not unhappy vision of skimming down into a garden of the 1960s, until you notice that the initial drop is so steep that you'd fall over the side as soon as you started. A literal objection, but no one wants to meditate on being dumped. The artist's eye here was not on sabotage, but on the most pleasing curves.

Lucas would like to say many things, but hasn't yet found a convincing language. (John Good, New York)

CLAUDIA ROTH PIERPONT

With a few exceptions, Lucian Freud portrays people he knows well, and what emerges from his intense scrutiny is a frankness without judgment. These works are less portraits than clinical representations of the body. Freud's gaze can be brutal—aging, sagging flesh, awkward limbs, bare genitals are portrayed with unflinching detail. What's unexpected is the sensuality. The paintings, though gritty, are lush with layers of pigment. The prints have rich surfaces. The drawings, with their feath-

Marcia Clark's panoramic paintings offer a new way of viewing landscape. We feel as if we are on the road, in the countryside, and we're traveling along by car. Some of that countryside is on the sides as we drive, but it also surrounds us—this duality we also experience as a unity. In *Mountain Road: Folding Screen*, Clark connects fourteen different-sized panels into a configuration of mountain, hill, road, and valley. The road twists and turns, we come up an incline on the left; we've already traveled around from the right. This painting literally weaves



Christopher Lucas's *Chakra Slide*.



Marcia Clark's *Mountain Road II*.

ery pencil marks and occasional watercolors, are the softest and most evocative of all. This retrospective of graphic works reveals a master of the figure and an oddly compassionate artist. (Brooke Alexander, New York) ALEXANDRA ENDERS

in and out along its nine-foot length (the tallest panels are twenty-five inches). *Mountain Road* is a relief that a viewer should consider from all angles and distances. As one's eyes move around Clark's paintings, one feels the speed of a car; but she is not interested in simulating the effects of film or photography—things are never a blur. The carefully chosen proportions of the panels, and their scale in relation to the whole work, add up to a combination of intimate landscape and grand view. (Blue Mountain, New York) BARBARA GOODSTEIN