

## The New York Times

# ART IN REVIEW; 'The Mark Gonzales Show'

By Holland Cotter

• Feb. 11, 2000

Alleged Galleries

809 Washington Street, between

Gansevoort and Horatio Streets

West Village

Through Feb. 27

The most gripping thing in this show of recent work by the California artist Mark Gonzales is a film by Cheryl Dunn of a skateboarder whizzing around the rooms and off the walls of a German museum. The performer is Mr. Gonzales, 31, who has an international reputation as a kind of Nureyev on wheels.

He is also a prolific poet, painter, sculptor, quilter and filmmaker. And all of these media play a role in a show that has the mark of irrepressible physical energy and a rapidly shifting attention span.

Poems are written in looping script across the gallery walls and hand-printed in paintings. The paintings, large and small, are filled with brushy colors and dashed-off cartoon figures. Films by the artist are on view, as is a patchwork quilt. The center of the gallery is taken up by a big pink fiberglass object, like a super-big bathtub duck, cast from the artist's design.

To say the show is all over the place is just to describe it. Speed and change seem to be essence of Mr. Gonzales's aesthetic. Occasionally he slows down, as in a series of small poem-paintings with phonetically spelled words written in gold ink, and the results are memorable. And sometimes he just explodes, as in a film clip of one of his readings. One minute he is standing behind a lectern; the next he is diving over a table headfirst, like a singer into a mosh pit.

At this point, poetry and performing are his strengths, but he is ambitious and entrepreneurial. (The show is part of a five-city tour that includes stops in Paris, Berlin, London and Tokyo.) He attracts an intriguing mix of fans; among recent visitors to Alleged were teenagers in skateboarder-homeboy gear. Rivetted by Ms. Dunn's film,

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they also lingered a bit over the paintings and poetry. Mr. Gonzales may be shaping a future art audience no one knew was there. HOLLAND COTTER