

ALEXANDRE

ARTnews: June 2002
By Deidre Stein Greben

Coinciding with the Morgan Library's exhibition devoted to the late New York dealer Pierre Matisse and his artists (including his famous father), this show featured many of the paintings that Loren MacIver exhibited early on at Pierre Matisse, the gallery that represented her for some 50 years. Most impressive in the exhibition was evidence that the years have done nothing to dim the immediacy or the appeal of these works.

The strength of MacIver's art comes from its ability to reconcile, or rather to harmonize, opposing impulses: murky tones with exuberant color, graphic iconography with blurry intervals, playfulness with poignancy. On the one hand, the jellied fish, along with the bits of ribboned sweets floating in powdery mist in the painting Penny Candy (1939) are dreamy- a true confection. By contrast, the abstract and leaflike forms that lurk underneath horizontal veils of deep color in Finit (1939), which was hanging nearby, have a hallucinatory glow of a different, eerie sort.

MacIver's depiction of mostly unassuming tokens, or emblems, as she has called them- buildings, plants, tables, and jugs- lifted from everyday life in Greenwich Village, Cape Cod, and key West go beyond the specifics of time and place with their hazy outlines, ungrounded placement, and pure form.

As Pierre Matisse recognized more than half a century ago, MacIver's enchanting hieroglyphics have the look of innocence but the power of knowledge.

291 Grand Street, New York, New York 10002

25 East 73rd Street, 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10021 212.755.2828 alexandregallery.com

ALEXANDRE GALLERY ALEXANDRE FINE ART INC. ESTABLISHED 1996