

NEW YORK

Ron Ehrlich

STEPHEN HALLER

To create the seductive surface that's becoming his trademark, Ron Ehrlich intermingles oil paint, wax, shellac, and crayons. Brushes, palette knives, and even a blowtorch are used to blend and fuse these ingredients into a glistening mix. Many areas look as though they're still wet, while a few turn matte, thanks to a generous sprinkling of plaster and marble dust.

The artist favors a restrained palette. Large rectangular bands of ivory, ocher, brown, and black predominate, accented by small bits of bright color. The overall impression is one of balance and refinement. These tasteful choices might appear a tad predictable but for Ehrlich's drawing, which imbues his works with an odd charm.

Using the point of a nail to inscribe simple outlines into the paint, the artist limns an array of conical vessels, bowls and teapots, stools and schematic tables in profile. (Like the fire-glazed sheen of his surface, many of these forms probably hark back to the five years Ehrlich spent in Japan making pottery.) One whimsical creature that reappears in several panels might be a long-legged dog or a pony. The incised drawing looks sweetly childlike and unexpected, especially in its elegant context.

GERARD HAGGERTY

Ron Ehrlich, *Untitled*, 1996,
oil and mixed media on panel, 72" x 72".
Stephen Haller.

