

ART NOTES

With just eight of his works, Manes is still one of the best

Boanerges.

From the Hebrew words for "sons of thunder," Jesus' epithet for apostles James and John.



Gary Schwan

It seems an odd title for a painting of an airplane. But this is no ordinary plane. It's an RAF Lancaster bomber from

World War II, an engine of wrath that delivered tons of thunder to Nazi Germany.

Okay, but isn't that an odd subject for a sophisticated 21st century painter — a giant plane spreading across three canvases, its propellers whizzing, the cockpit approaching like a death's head, the condor wings dripping paint the color of dried blood?

Odd, except Paul Manes is said to be one of those artists who paints what interests him. A cat. A tree. Fish on a plate. A pile of pottery bowls. Raindrops on water.

These are a few of his favorite things. It's easy to imagine him as a kid back in East Texas, furiously drawing airplanes in the margin of his school notebook. He's a New Yorker now, and whatever he paints, and however he chooses to paint, he does very well, indeed.

A mere eight of his works are at Eaton Fine Art in West Palm Beach, but they comprise one of the season's best gallery shows. They're accompanied by an installation of Rosemarie Castoro's elegant and evocative construc-



Paul Manes' *Boanerges*, 2003. Oil on canvas.



Paul Manes' *Untitled (Rain made)*, 2004. Oil on canvas.



Rosemarie Castoro's *Mosquito Networks*, 2001-04. Aluminum.

tions made of stainless steel and aluminum wire mesh.

These are two veteran artists who know what they're doing.

Manes certainly knows all the technical tricks. His untitled painting of rain falling on a stream is a bravura exercise in pattern and perspective, enhanced by a subtle salad of color - muted greens, grays, blacks, browns that mingle deliciously, adding flavor to each other. And just the hint of vegetation at the upper corner of the canvas orients the eye, although the perspective remains tricky as the canvas has a kind of all-over



effect.

A totally different effect is created by a still life of fish on a plate that calls to mind William Merritt Chase's treatment of the same subject. His proud and impassive cat sitting on its haunch-

es is set against a greenish gold background with the texture of crushed jewels.

Two paintings of piled-up bowls are both simple and sophisticated — and very different in size and effect. The larger version is called *San Sebastian*, hinting at some personal meaning for the artists, or perhaps a reference to the tonal qualities of some Spanish painting. (Only two other works are titled.)

Manes' paintings represent a kind of skillful simplicity, and are a treat to the eye.

Castoro is another veteran New York artist. Her dra-

matically lit installation features a dozen or so forms that call to mind everything from a disembodied female figure, to a sea anemone, to architectural elements such as columns.

They have a swishy, ghostly elegance, and as installed almost appear engaged in a kind of dance.

Eaton Fine Art is at 435 Gardenia St., West Palm Beach. The exhibit runs through May 8.