

The New York Times

November 1, 2002

ART IN REVIEW; Taylor Davis

By KEN JOHNSON

Triple Candie

461 West 126th Street, Harlem

Through Nov. 10

Taylor Davis's beautiful wooden sculptures look like straightforward exercises in Neo-Minimalist style. Some are in the form of industrial palettes lying flat or standing on edge: one slatted structure looks like a crate for shipping a large machine or a Richard Serra sculpture; another resembles a farm animal's pen.

Up close, you see how perfectly they are made: screws neatly sunk, joints almost seamless, edges and corners crisp and square. Donald Judd would approve. You also discover that the apparently pellucid structural order is not so simple. The penlike enclosure has an inner fence and an outer fence, interconnected in a way that confounds immediate comprehension. Following the structural logic is like wandering through a maze, a vivid lesson about relations between perception and cognition.

Walking past the big cratelike piece -- 9 feet tall and 14 feet long -- you notice your own reflection flickering between the slats. On the inside, it turns out, the vertical planks have long mirrors set into them. Poke your head through an opening and you behold a hall of mirrors, a kaleidoscopic conflation of the actual and the virtual.

A box the size of a big wardrobe has a rickety construction unlike that of the others. Ms. Davis made straight-lined cuts through the plywood sides, turning each panel into a wobbly maze of narrow bands. The panels are joined at the edges into something curiously dysfunctional, promising, one hopes, even more cannily disordered works to come. KEN JOHNSON