

# Ruth Hardinger

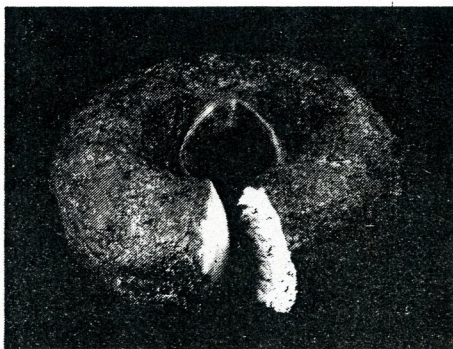
PHILIPPE STAIB GALLERY

ADAM MCGOVERN

Ruth Hardinger's playful sculptures elicit a surprising level of unamusement from some art world fixtures. Her exuberant and chromatic works may transgress an unwritten orthodoxy which equates dourness with depth and ugliness with authenticity, but I find them to be an irresistible heresy.

Hardinger's organic forms evoke the experience of nature in both its intimacy and enormity. Her textures are topographical, effecting miniature panoramas, while her unevenly stacked biomorphic rings take on a close, cavernous character when viewed from above.

After Hardinger has hooked the viewer on investigating the interiors of her shoulder-high towers of bagels, an interactive comedic performance is generated when one ascends a staircase to attempt the same for a precariously high piling. The experience yields a whimsical adventurousness—and a good-natured commentary on the teetering extremes of creative hubris in particular and human ambition in general. An unfashionable irreverence, perhaps, but one which an enthusiastic opening night throng would attest will never lose its style. †



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*Ruth Hardinger, Sun/Moon Piece, mixed materials, 1991, 38"×38"×13"*

COVER, NOV '92