

# Art

SYRACUSE HERALD-AMERICAN

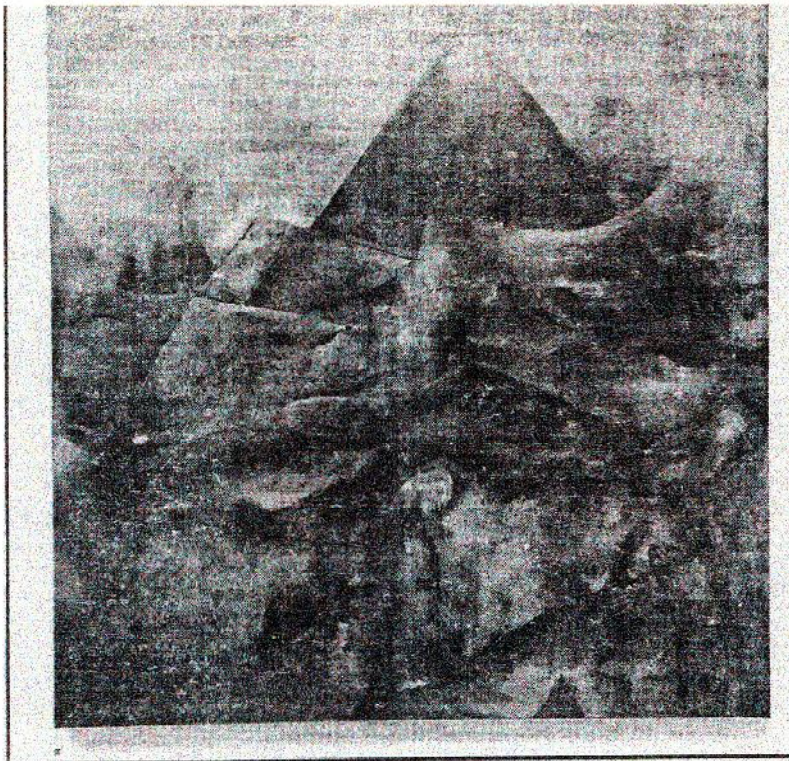
STARS (Nov. 17, 1996) 9

## Just the facts

**WHAT:** "Marks of Passing," works by Linda Bigness, and "Bridge of Transparent Hours," works by Mimi Czajka Graminski and Leslie Yudelson.

**WHERE:** Chapman Cultural Center (Bigness), and Chapman Art Center Gallery (Graminski and Yudelson), adjacent galleries at Cazenovia College; 655-8283.

**WHEN:** Both shows run through Nov. 26, with identical hours: 1-4 and 7-9 p.m. Monday to Thursday, 1-4 p.m. Friday and 2-6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.



"Marks of Passing," in Linda Bigness' show of the same name.

## Linda Bigness' oils, mixed-media works are haunting, powerful

Linda Bigness calls the exhibition at Cazenovia College's Chapman Cultural Center "Marks of Passing," and it's an appropriate title, denoting both passing through her travels in Mexico and England — and time's passing.

Indeed, many of these oils and mixed-media works on paper are haunting reminders of how fragile and transient our encounters, visual and otherwise, really are.

In the paintings, architectural and geological formations loom toward us and then are enveloped in mist; or rear up crazily as if shaken loose from their moorings, or appear to evaporate at the very moment they take shape. Volume is experienced as space, structure as fluidity.

Bigness uses a delicious panoply of pigments that are light in hue yet paradoxically intense and saturated, and she applies paint luxuriantly. Curving planes of color intersect along dark boundary lines, reminiscent of Synchronist works of the early 20th century, which emphasized color, usually in large, geometric patterns.

This is especially true of the beautifully composed "Artists Book V," a mixed-media work with curving angles and echoing forms in green, blue and purple that seem illuminated from within.

Towers with small windows lean toward each other in a dizzying perspective in the 1993 canvas "Flight through Fancy"; and the angles of

clouds and shadows in "A Village Found II." These and other paintings by Bigness bring Chagall to mind, with their whimsical point of view, their softening and melding of forms.

Mountain shapes and lighted windows create a decorative pattern in "Perestroika Revisited," a 1996 oil that is not as well resolved as the others.

Far more successful among the newest pieces is the mixed-media "Ancient Book I," with its layers of paper and paint suggesting buried civilizations, its linear squiggles like a no-longer comprehended alphabet, its dynamic wind-and-time-swept atmosphere.

The best of the oils is the undated, unsigned but presumably recent "Marks of Passing," depicting a distant pyramid, cloud-tipped, with vapors swirling over successive ridges. Layers of glistening paint — gold, pink, red, purple, green, blue — are metaphors both for geological and personal change.

Among the works on paper, one of the strongest is the 1996 "Green Square I," a patchwork of mottled tones and thick textures, tumbling forms and torn edges through which a startling patch of red bursts into view like a reminder of ancient brutality.

Bigness, who has a degree from Syracuse University, has shown throughout New York state, as well as in Philadelphia and Vermont. This fine exhibition remains on view

# STARS

MAGAZINE



**SHERRY CHAYAT**

Sherry Chayat of Syracuse has been writing free-lance articles about art for Stars since 1985. A graduate of Vassar College, she also studied at the New York Studio School in New York City. She began writing on art in 1969, as an editorial