

Where the Wild Things Are

by R.C. Baker

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The northern lights scribble across a night sky; an owl drops silent and heavy as an anvil—death from above for some hapless creature scurrying across the fog-shrouded ground. Uttech paints mysterious forests, their bare, scraggly trees and heaps of glacial boulders conveying a sense of foreboding that brings to mind the German romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich's ruined Gothic cathedrals. But instead of robed monks, howling wolves and rearing bears hold dominion over the swamps and wild meadows. All these works were painted during the last two years and possess a formal beauty: Green lily pads provide dotted counterpoint to the broad orange sweeps of a sunrise reflected in a pond; lakes and towering pines are obscured by clouds of birds, scattered as densely across the surface as Pollock's splatters. All manner of beasts stampede in one direction—what are they fleeing? Or pursuing? As every city slicker knows, the woods are paradise—just don't get caught in them after dark.

Ursula von Rydingsvard

This German-born artist uses a circular saw to chop stacks of cedar lumber into fluidly elegant sculptures. The freestanding, 13-foot-tall *Wall Pocket* (2003–04) is a gnarled column, open on one side and hollowed out like a rotted tree trunk. The broad surfaces are striated like sediment, and the roughly carved butt ends thrust unevenly from the gaping maw. Often the pieces are marked with quick pencil lines and scrawled letters, guides for aligning the hundreds of cut-down timbers, lending a sense of engineered rigor to her raw, undulating forms. *Galerie Lelong, 528 W 26th, 212-315-0470. Through Oct 21.*