

# Weekend **FINE ARTS LEISURE**

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## **William Anthony**

### **'Once More With Feeling'**

*Dorfman Projects  
529 West 20th Street, Chelsea  
Through Oct. 26*

William Anthony is 68 and had his first solo exhibition 40 years ago, but he still draws like a child. In scrawly pencil lines, he outlines figures that look like sock puppets with oversize heads and sausage-shaped limbs. He's no innocent outsider, though, but a sophisticated visual comedian who plays the fool to hilarious and often profound effect. And if you look closely, you discover that his primitivistic lines are made with an exactingly delicate touch and that his smudgy brushwork has a finely tuned sensuousness of hue and surface.

In the past Mr. Anthony has directed his juvenile-style vision at targets like the Bible and 20th-century warfare (see "War Is Swell: A Kid's Idiotic Vision of World War II"). This show offers a series of spins on well-known paintings, including Hieronymus Bosch's "Ship of Fools," Picasso's "Frugal Repast" and Warhol's series of portraits of Edith Scull.

More than just funny versions of famous paintings, Mr. Anthony's pictures are forms of art criticism and art history. A painting with the self-explanatory title "Sigmund Makes the Scene With Some Cézanne Bathers, Thereby Screwing Up Their Sex Lives" reminds us that Freud and Cézanne were contemporaries and that both worked at baring the elemental infrastructure of the modern psyche. To satirize blind reverence for canonical art is not new, but it is rarely done with such soulful wit.

KEN JOHNSON

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