



ROSENWALD-WOLF GALLERY

Detail from Bill Beckley's "Elements of Romance" (1977), Cibachrome photographs, at the UArts Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery.

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Entertainment — **The Arts**

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Bill Beckley: Revisiting a '70s conceptualist out of Tyler

In 1970, on the heels of earning an M.F.A. from Temple University's Tyler School of Art, Bill Beckley, raised in Hamburg, Pa., did what any ambitious

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young artist would do: He moved to New York, to SoHo's then-nascent art district.

At Tyler, he had studied with the legendary Italo Scanga, who introduced him to Bruce Nauman, Dan Flavin, Sol LeWitt, and then-Whitney curator Marcia Tucker.

His timing was perfect. Tucker had already seen to it that Beckley's work was included in the first conceptual art show in the United States, "Art in the Mind," in 1969. In New York, he joined with Gordon Matta-Clark, Rafael Ferrer, Barry Le Va, Alan Saret, and others to organize the first, much-talked-about exhibition at the 112 Greene Street Workshop. Beckley became one of the group of "narrative" artists (a term he coined), who mixed photographs with text.

An exhibit at the University of the Arts' Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery offers a look back at Beckley's color photographs, which derived their style from advertising and included mysterious, sometimes erotic written narratives that would never have passed muster at Doyle, Dane, Bernbach.

It's fascinating to see their influence on such Pictures Generation artists as Richard Prince, and on Jeff Koons, who saw them in Beckley's 1978 solo show at MoMA, when Koons was working as a guard there. (One of the works in this show is on loan from Koons).

Through April 20 at Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, University of the Arts, 333 S. Broad St., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, noon to 5 p.m. Saturdays. Information: 215-717-6480 or uarts.edu/about/rosenwald-wolf-gallery.

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