

Taking a Fresh Look at the Webs Our Society Has Woven

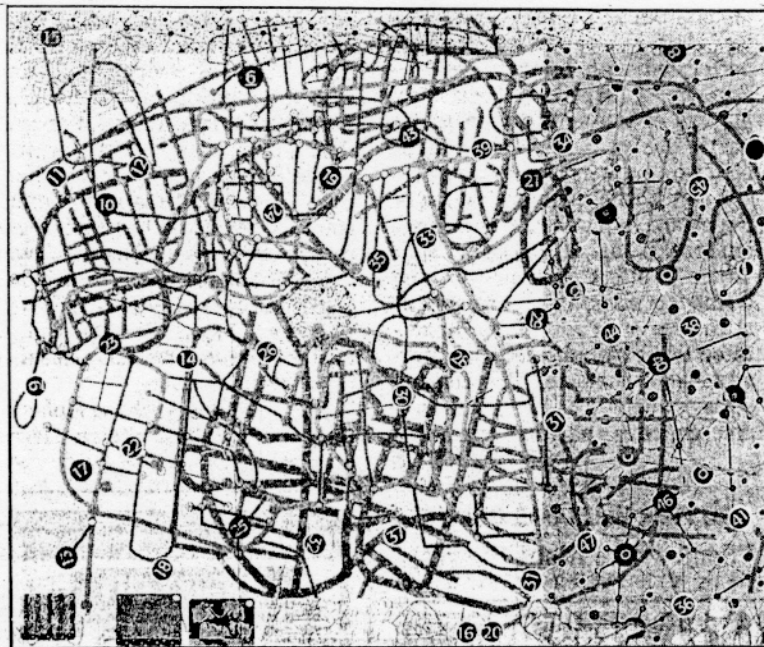
ART REVIEWS

By LEAH OLLMAN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Let us forget for a nanosecond that we live in the Information Age, Miriam Dym's dazzling installation at Post Gallery immerses us in signs and symbols representing the swift, efficient movement of data. A network of wires and circuits has not become our culture's circulatory system by default, but by our own design. In a feat of self-fulfilling logic, we have invested that network with absolute, divine power and succumbed to it as if it were inevitable and natural to do so.

Dym, who lives in Northern California, wrests the inevitability out of this equation and invites a fresh look at the web we've woven. She papers the interior walls and part of the floor of Post's small upstairs gallery with slickly laminated, computer-generated laser prints that resemble densely overlaid street maps, astronomical charts and sewing patterns. They teem with lines, arrows, numbers and diagrammatic symbols in bright, synthetic colors—all quite authoritative-looking, but totally ungrounded. There is no key, no scale, no identification on any of them, including one wall panel that suggests an interior showroom or office. They make reference to nothing but themselves.

As pure pattern and decoration,



Post Gallery

An image from Miriam Dym's "New Planning" installation at Post.

Dym's work is glorious and vibrant. The beauty of these systems, when detached from their meaning, is purely visual and physical. It bears no denotational weight and instead grounds itself in the body, in the senses, which suddenly become attuned to how deprived they typically are in the high-tech, disembodied transfer of information.

"My work speculates on the delicacy of a human voice in this post-industrial age," Dym has written in reference to previous

work along the same lines, some of it taking the form of elaborate board games. Here, too, Dym is wry and playful. She has eliminated the goal of the game, but kept the rules, prompting us to reassess the validity of both.

■ Post Gallery, 1904 E. 7th Place, (213) 622-8580, through May 2. Closed Sundays through Tuesdays.