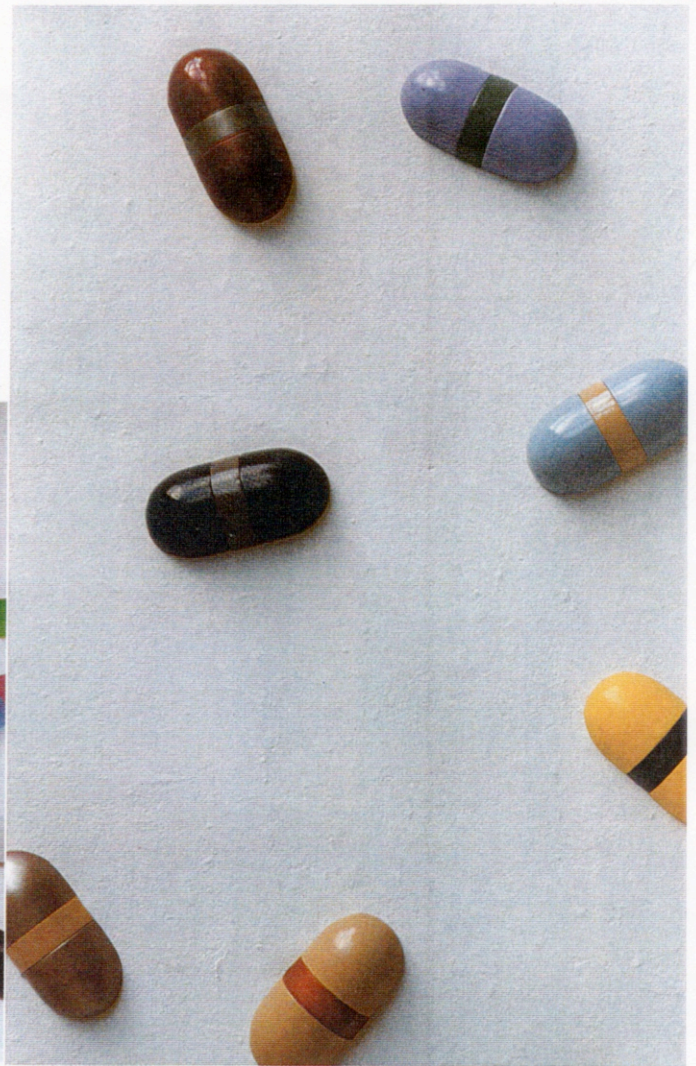


PLACEBO EFFECTS Three examples of Beverly Fishman's art: *below*, 'A Week's Supply' (detail), 1999; *right*, 'Small Comforts', 1999; and *bottom right*, 'Feel Good # 1-90', 1999

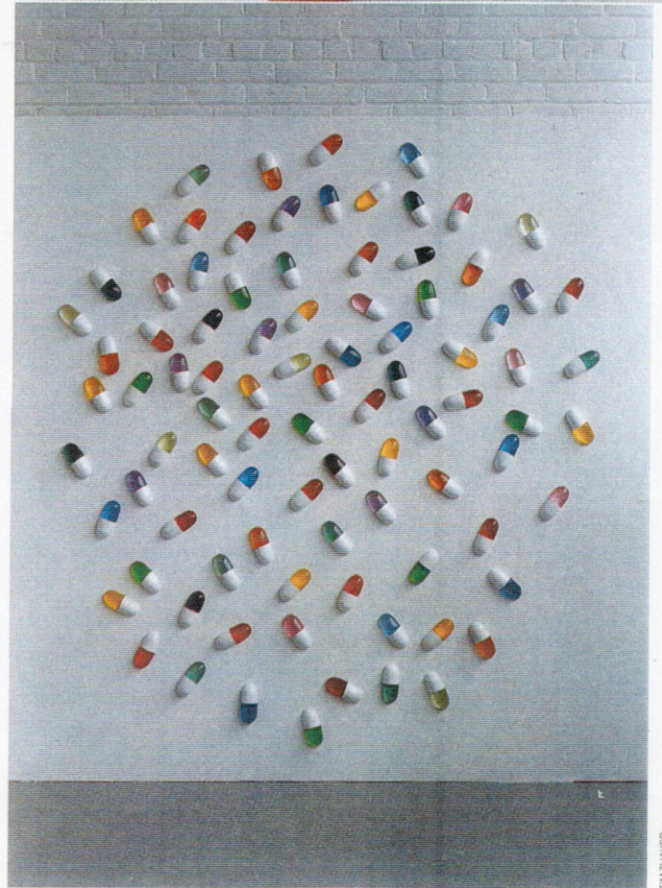


POP ART Beverly Fishman gets inspiration from drugs, but not in the Warhol way

If we are what we eat, then the world is full of Valium queens and Viagra kings – at least if artist Beverly Fishman is to be believed. Focusing on 'the growth of the fix', Fishman spent 1999 creating resin cast artworks of pick-me-ups for hardened pill poppers. 'Sweet Dreams Lullaby' is a candy-coloured selection of sleeping pills which glow in the dark; 'Arsenal' signifies the stash of capsules found in your average Fendi clutch, while 'Sugar Free' reflects our obsession with Nutrasweet and E numbers. Then there's an organic piece called 'Ecstasy', a green pill entitled 'Envy' and a clutch of capsules sprayed with car paint ('in the same way that you are what you drive, you are what you take').

Fishman combines her fascination with 'issues of the body' with a teaching post at Cranbrook Academy of Art, Michigan, but felt that neurotic 1999 was the ideal year to embark on canvases for the chemical generation. 'Society has reached the point where, if you don't get a prescription every time you go to the doctor, you feel as though you haven't got your money's worth,' she says. And if you are the type who confuses Mogadon with M&Ms, or Sudafed with Smarties, then, according to Fishman, the marketing men have won. 'The strategy of marketing pills is played out through their design. People want pills that look like candy or pills which are extremely seductive.' And, as if to prove a point, Fishman has created a series of enlarged individual capsules that can be hung on the wall – the perfect eye candy for every hypochondriac's home. *EMMA O'KELLY* ✨

Fishman's work will be on show in the Post Gallery in LA in June.



TIM THAYER