

UP NOW

Mark Sheinkman

THOMAS HEALY

THROUGH APRIL 18

In his first solo exhibition of painting, Mark Sheinkman has in mind the tradition of scroll painting. As with his drawings in graphite, Sheinkman explores the infinite potential of finite means, creating bold black-and-white forms from smeared vertical and horizontal lines.

Sheinkman's oil paintings mimic scrolls, though on a much larger scale.

In one piece over nine feet long, the bulk of a roll implies that a far longer painting still waits unseen. What is revealed is a silvery gray field intersected at diverse angles by black vertical lines of even thickness. The lines are smeared by erasures that have left horizontal bands of varying width, ranging in tone from black to gray.

The smears resemble skid marks, making explicit the reference to another famous scroll made when Robert Rauschenberg and John Cage inked and printed a car tire by driving over a long roll of paper. But despite appearances, Sheinkman's paintings are not scrolls. There is nothing to unroll, as the cylinders at either end are solid, giving the paintings a sculptural—if not monumental—presence.



Mark Sheinkman, *3.6.98, 1998*, oil and alkyd on canvas on cardboard cylinders, 92" x 32" x 16". Thomas Healy.

If they resemble scrolls, Sheinkman's paintings also recall metal sheets being rolled from presses. This mechanical quality is echoed in the manner in which lines are disrupted, as the erasures suggest random error as much as design. Another large work positions two rolls so close together that the painting between them is all but hidden. Almost nine feet tall, the two cylinders are painted a steel gray to suggest tremendous weight. Crisscrossing the surface are thin black lines that dissipate like frequency waves. The result may resemble marble columns, but the waves seem more like fissures or flaws than marble grain. Perhaps both analogies apply, for Sheinkman's work maintains a classical restraint despite its edgy, unnerving presence. GRADY T. TURNER