

ARTNEWS

Rebecca Warren

Matthew Marks

In her recent exhibition “Pas de Deux”—the title refers to a dance choreographed for two performers—Rebecca Warren



Rebecca Warren, *In the Last Ditch I Think of You*, 2005, reinforced clay and plinth, 70" x 33½" x 30".
Matthew Marks.

paired her trademark lumpy sculptures with airy vitrines, playing roughness against refinement and weight against buoyancy.

Warren says her work is inspired in part by Degas's paintings of ballerinas, but the frenzied texture and aggressive sexuality of her figurative sculptures were more reminiscent of de Kooning. Made from unfired clay and showing the artist's fingerprints, these dense, patched-together works (all 2005) sported multiple breasts and phalluses and

exaggerated, almost cartoonlike limbs and facial features. With its oversize ears, feet, and toes and its elongated nose, *Clark* resembled Jughead from the “Archie” comics. Another piece, *Courteille*, was a woman with a huge vulva and buttocks—practically a Hot-tentot Venus—standing in contrapposto, gazing upward. *In the Last Ditch I Think of You*, a single mass of protruding breasts, nipples, petal-like folds, and phalluses, resembled a caricature of a librarian in profile, her hair teased into a ridiculous curly 'do.

But most intriguing were Warren's intimate vitrines, which contain found objects such as bark, twigs, Styrofoam balls, wood shavings, and bits of clay scattered around partly obscured neon lights. In one, a red pom-pom nestled within folded, unfired clay seemed more explicit than any body part. The feeling of such understated works as *In the Bois* was that of a dressing room strewn with personal effects cast off in a moment of passion; their quiet eroticism provided a fine accompaniment to the intensity of the sexy, swaggering sculptures that dominated the room.

—Rachel Somerstein