

Richard Yarde

JUNE KELLY

In this powerful show of watercolors, Richard Yarde used evocative imagery—hands, faces, patterns of dots that imply a board game or a chart of psychic energies—to describe his recent brush with death, the result of a serious kidney illness. As he has written, his experience has given his art a sense of urgency: "My intention is to use my painting as a kind of 'grounding' for the energy that has returned to me and express this through my work."

Yarde's spare imagery tends toward the autobiographical: there are images of his face and hands, and full nude portraits, front and back. *Head and Hands I* has two studies of the artist's head and two hands separated by dots that intimate the lines of a palm. The grave expression of the self-portraits, coupled with the mute eloquence of the two raised palms, implies vol-

umes about the ritual of healing. Yarde seems to allude to the realms of fate and chance, where life's meaning balances between the haphazard and some larger will.

Yarde does not lack humor, though. A large work, *Josephine's Baffle Triptych*, poses Josephine Baker in her usual state of advanced undress and expresses the great dancer's joyous eroticism. A number of smaller studies—including pictures of a hat, a rooster, and a lobster, gathered under the title *Richard's Cards*—were also quite engaging. Yarde skillfully travels the distance between stoicism and lightness of being.

—Jonathan Goodman



Richard Yarde, *Head and Hands I*, 1992, opaque watercolor, 36 by 53 inches. June Kelly.