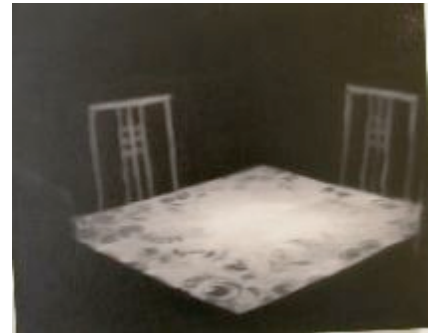


## Gallery Xes

March 1, 2005

Posted by Roberta Fallon

Was it me or was there an unusual amount of energy in the air in February, a time normally devoted to burrowing and dreaming about beaches. I'm not only talking about The Gates and Dali, the two blockbuster high energy events. But in the local galleries, too, there was much going on. Libby told you about the shows at the Gallery Xes here and here and I want to do a quickie on them before moving into the March landscape because they were both so good.



### Vox Populi

Joseph Hu's grisaille paintings of an apartment sans occupants seemed, because of their horizontal striations, to be floating sideways. The works were like visions from a dream state. Everything seemed underwater, or like a trance-induced vision. Desire and hurt lie on these works which are not about happy memories but about the ones that, like toothaches, are painful and demand constant attention.

The clear reference to Gerhard Richter's grisaille paintings (shown, "Der Kongress") and to Hiroshi Sugimoto's blurry black and white photographs of iconic buildings like the Empire State Building made these works reverberate with -- if not politics, then the sociology of people and the times and places that shape them. The title, "It takes a Candle when it goes to the Cellar" (top image) for the painting that seemed to me the most beautiful and eerie, had echoes to the movie "Silence of the Lambs" in which a serial killer dehumanizes his female victims by calling them "it."



"Silence of the Lambs" probably has nothing at all to do with the work but my flashing on that cinematic reference had the effect of turning the entire installation into a kind of painted crime scene.