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ART IN REVIEW

ART IN REVIEW; Theodore Roszak

By GRACE GLUECK

Zabriskie Gallery

41 East 57th Street, Manhattan

Through Nov. 29

He is probably best known as a sculptor of the expressive first generation New York School, but before that, in the 1930's, Theodore Roszak (1907-1981) was a machine age Constructivist whose cool, eccentric arrangements of geometric forms reflected an industrial civilization.

This show consists mostly of photograms -- cameraless works made by placing objects on photosensitive paper exposed to light -- from the 1930's. Perhaps inspired by Moholy-Nagy's experiments in the same medium, the imagery, all in black and white, is masterfully manipulated in terms of light and shadow, thanks to Roszak's color experience as a painter. They suggest objects of geometric and biomorphic persuasion that could be otherworldly phenomena or debris from a manned space flight floating in a nebulous empyrean.

Some are rather simple: two white forms of uncertain origin that snuggle together on a dark ground. Others are complex, like one in which light-struck white circles and rectangles mingle with more shadowy ones on a ground bisected by two diagonal lines. In another, a span of light fans out on a gray ground to illuminate an intricate bit of scientific something or other hovering in air. They are lovely works that share the craftsmanship and artistry of Roszak's sculpture.

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