

Siclen, Bill Van. "Putting a Face n 'Human Space'." Providence Journal Bulletin,

**ON EXHIBIT**

## Putting a face on 'human space'

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**PROVIDENCE**

It's no secret that the art world can be a maddeningly unpredictable place. The artist or movement that's up one week can be down the next.

Yet over the past 25 years, Providence artist Richard Fleischner has produced a body of work that's remarkable for its consistency and for its clarity of vision. This sense of focus is even more surprising when you consider that Fleischner doesn't work within traditional artistic categories, but blends elements of painting, sculpture, architecture, landscaping and urban design.

Fleischner's talent for creative synthesis is one of the central themes in an otherwise wide-ranging exhibit at Brown University's David Winton Bell Gallery. Called "Richard Fleischner: Projects" and supported by a grant from Fleet National Bank, the show brings together dozens of drawings, sculptures, photographs, site plans and other works from the early 1970s to the present. Included are plans and photographs of two of Fleischner's largest projects to date — a public plaza for the City of St. Paul, Minn., and a landscaped entrance for the headquarters of Sony Pictures in Culver City, Calif.

The result is a long-overdue retrospective for one of Rhode Island's most keenly intelligent contemporary artists.

The key to Fleischner's work is a search for what he calls "human space." Sometimes the space in question is so bigger than a small sculpture or drawing, in which case you enter it visually and mentally rather than physically. Sometimes it's an enclosed space — a room or "interior" lined with walls of wood, earth,

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**RICHARD FLEISCHNER's** work is the subject of a show at Brown University. Works include *Modular Block Constructions*, above, the untitled gouache on paper in top inset, and *Sod Maze*, lower inset, created for an outdoor sculpture show in Newport in 1974.