

GALLERIES

Tania Bruguera

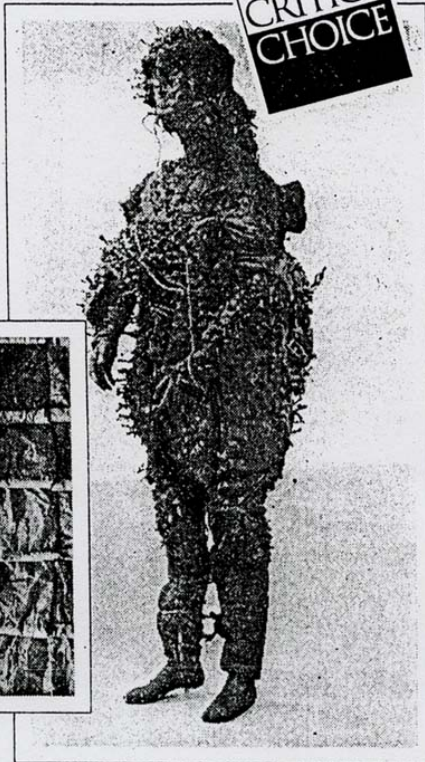
Along the corridor leading into the Rhona Hoffman Gallery is Tania Bruguera's beautiful yet troubling installation *Poetic Justice*: used tea bags shingle both walls, broken occasionally by tiny LCD screens playing sepia film loops of marching figures or of black faces being touched by people outside the frame or being covered by an oxygen mask held by a nest of hands. The tea smells wonderful, and the quiet space is cozy and contemplative. But what culture are we looking at through these LCD portals? Who grew the tea? Who made the tea bags? And who drank the tea? What are the two sides marked by the two walls? Are we intended to be sympathetic observers or, somehow, complacent exploiters? Inside the gallery another work, a life-size sculpture titled *Destierro (Displacement)*, only adds to the uneasiness. This exquisitely made but hulking black figure—a woman, judging by her undersized, graceful feet and hands—stands coated in mud, nails, twine, and a few stray pencils. She's burdened and lumbering, a striking counterpoint to Giacometti's lithe walking men, and her face is a hollow, without scrutable emotion. The longer I stood there, the more her burden—whatever it was—weighed on me and the more I had the sense that I was somehow culpable. Rhona Hoffman Gallery, 118 N. Peoria, through March 13. Hours are 10 to 5:30 Tuesday through Friday and 11 to 5:30 Saturday; 312-455-1990. —Tamara Faulkner

PHOTO | TAMARA FAULKNER



Poetic Justice
(detail)

CRITIC'S
CHOICE



Destierro (Displacement)

PHOTO | MICHAEL TROPEA