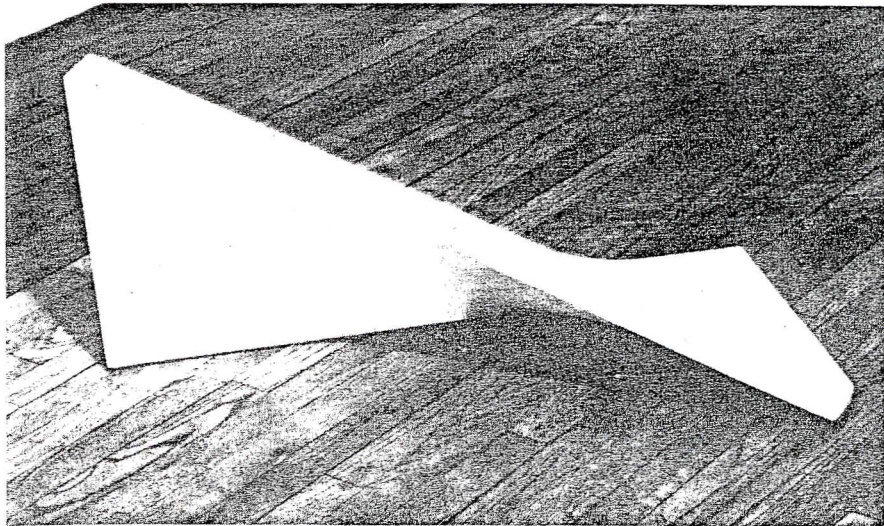

GUNTHER GERZSO

—**Mary-Anne Martin/Fine Art**

THE WORK of this veteran Mexican artist is monumental, seductive and precise—in equal measure. It is demanding painting. The recent retrospective of work from 1958 to 1984 was not one to see quickly. Viewed with care, the show proved to be deeply satisfying.

Gerzso begins with architectonic Mexican forms, ranging in color from brash primaries to earth and sand tones. There's a luminosity, a depth to all the colors. The overlapping planes, despite their hard edges, seem soft. Sometimes lines appear on the surface of the forms or actually cut through the forms (defining their bulk). Such motifs are elaborated, scattered across the canvas. A line often suggests a curve, a curve another dimension. There is a push-pull effect. As a result, pivotal perspective points seem to constantly change.

There's another kind of pull too. Despite all the movement there is a suggestion that the central action exists just beyond the canvas. Gerzso was art director for over 200 films—many of Buñuel's, among them—and he's expert at creating such unsettling effects. Here the way we see is as important as what we see. There seems to be an infinite sensuous progression. In some of his



Tony DeLap. Haunted Deck. 1984. wood. 42 by 15½ by 11 inches. Robert Elkon.

paintings Gerzso includes whimsical visual puns of windows popping open. This is not surprising, for the artist is as much a child of Surrealism as of abstraction.

The retrospective chronicled a remarkably consistent exploration of theme and style. However, Gerzso's use of shadow has given way to flatter, razor-sharp edges that heighten the hidden dimension of his paintings.

From his earliest paintings to his present work, this is art to delight in.

—Elizabeth C. Hanley