

# The New York Times

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1998

## Weekend **FINE ARTS LEISURE**

### ART IN REVIEW

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**Maria Marshall****'When I Grow Up I Want to Be a  
Cooker'**

*Team Gallery  
527 West 26th Street  
Chelsea  
Through Nov. 14*

We need a moratorium on video projections. There are too many and most are inane and visually enervating. Occasionally, however, you come across a gem that makes you believe in the future of the genre. Maria Marshall, a young Londoner showing in New York for the first time, has produced one.

"When I Grow Up I Want to be a Cooker" was made on 35-millimeter film and then digitally converted to video, giving it an optical vividness rare for video projections. It represents an angelic 2-year-old boy (the artist's son, who once said the words used for the film's title) taking a drag on a cigarette, inhaling and blowing a neat little smoke ring. This event is broken up into several artfully composed shots and repeated three times before the screen fills with smoke, whereupon the 20-second loop repeats.

The quick cuts, the repetition, the visual opulence and the charisma of the child, who directs a melting gaze into the camera, create a seductive beauty.

For a second you may be shocked by the subject matter, but the hyper-real artificiality tells you that the child is not really smoking. Yet even as fiction, the movie exerts a considerable psychological charge. It is comically incongruous, and the collision of innocence and experience is morally startling.

KEN JOHNSON