



## Material success

MICHAEL RAEDECKER



The Approach, E2

Simon Grant

MICHAEL Raedecker has found a painterly language which has turned him into a bit of a star. There are now queues of collectors across the globe waiting for him to finish his next canvas.

This is his second solo show at The Approach, one of the most exciting galleries in the East End, and it is even better than the first.

Raedecker made a name for him self with landscapes and interiors which combined paint - lots of muted greens and greys - with woven wool and cotton. Here, his needle has become the paint-brush, with the surface of the works becoming patchwork of images - wool for plants, cotton for shadows.

The different thickness and applications of the threads give the images their tone. A bundle of overpainted threads forms the trees' foliage; thick wool traces the outline of a log cabin. Sometimes it is shagpile thick.

At a distance you can't see all this. Only when you are up close do you recognise the textures and, at the same time, the immense amount of labour which has gone into these works. If this all sounds dangerously close to those hideous



Spinning a yarn: Raedecker's Beam 2000 from wool and cotton

wool-and-nail paintings which found their way into homes in the Sixties, then think again. Naff these are not.

Raedecker, who used to be a fashion designer (he worked with Martin Margiela), gleans his curiously nostalgic imagery from a wide range of sources; from 18th century Dutch landscape paintings to interior-design magazines, from thriller movies to architects' plans.

Rather than being self-consciously referential about their influences, as many contemporary painters are, Raedecker blends them all with great subtlety. His vision is not a Utopian one and his locatoins don't look like fund place.

But neither are they depressing. They are suggestive spaces, framed well as compositions without being descriptive.

There is not enough informatin to start reading a narrative. This is what makes them worth revisiting - there is always something missing. It is up to us to find the missing part of the jigsaw. Fantastic.

The Approach, first floor, 47 Approach Road, E2 (020 8983 3878), Thursday to Sunday, until 18 June. New portraits by Raedecker at One in the Other, 1 Tenter Ground, E1 (0207 241 5282), Friday to Sunday until 11 June.

**Ratings:**  
 O adequate  
 ★ good,  
 ★★ very good,  
 ★★★ outstanding,  
 X poor