

DAVID BONETTI

GALLERY WATCH

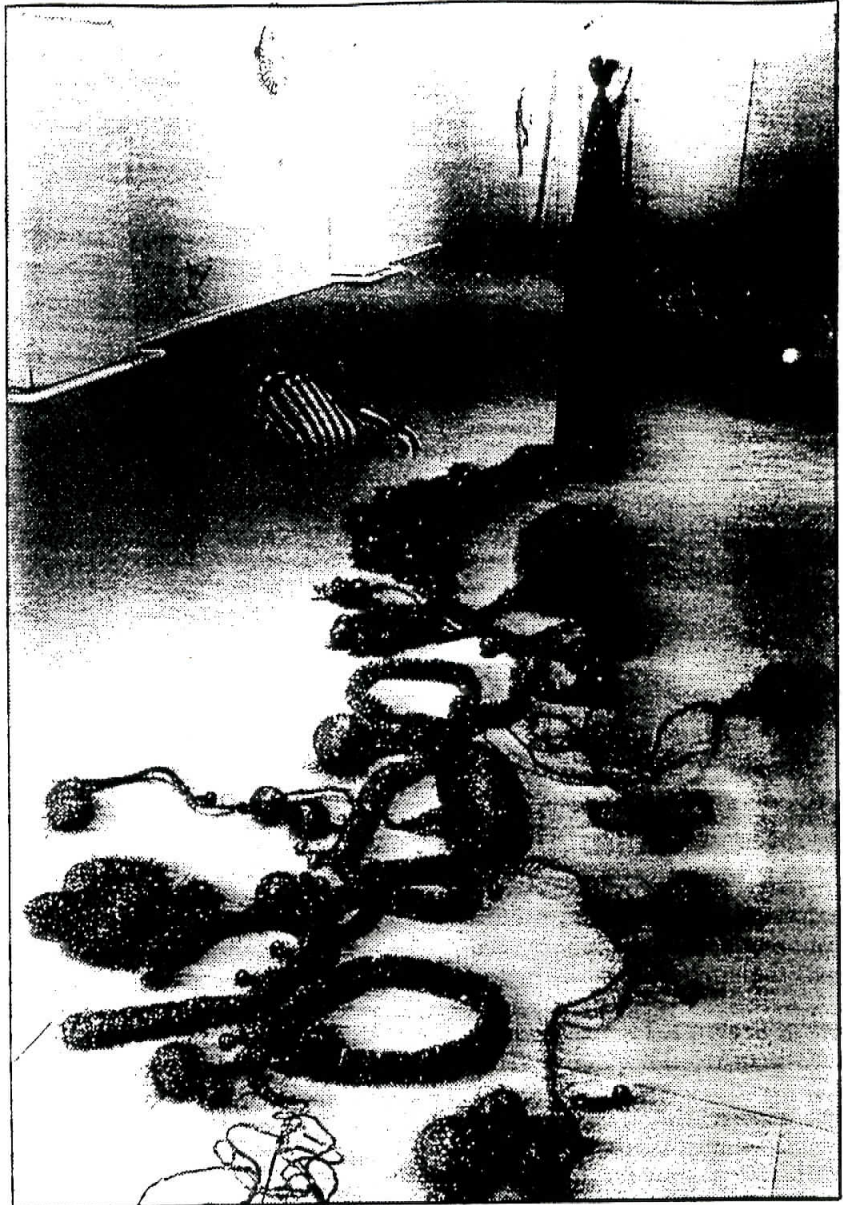
Summer art shows can too be interesting

At the Victoria Room (through Sept. 17), Angeleno artist **Terri Friedman** is on a kitsch rampage. The infectiously titled exhibition, "**Sunny von Bulow is Still Alive,**" is an homage, of sorts, to the most famous coma'd society lady in America — 14 years and still counting! Friedman recounts that the 63-year-old von Bulow is dressed and made-up daily and that fresh flowers and music fill her hospital room. She calls the heiress, played by Glenn Close in *The Mirror*, a "Decorated Living Corpse." The exhibition could be called "Decorations for Sunny" or, getting right to the point, "Sunny Decorations."

The first thing you see is an absolutely hideous hanging contraption appropriately titled "Over the Top." Presumably a chandelier, it looks more like a Jewish marriage canopy, something von Bulow probably wouldn't recognize. Made of a tragic gold velvet with tinsel fringe and sprouting bags wrapped with gold lamé, it is topped with a cluster of bottles half-filled — or half-empty, if you are a negative type — with pink liquid.

Other highlights of the exhibition are "Fantasies of Thirst," a rambling faux-organic floor construction that features blue lamé-wrapped styrofoam balls sprouting blue tinsel hairs, and "Sunny Side Down," a neo-rococo construction of endlessly curlicuing tubes through which gold-flecked water runs.

Sunny von Bulow, a woman whose money was old and whose husbands were Central European, would undoubtedly be flabber-



Terri Friedman's "Fantasies of Thirst" at the Victoria Room.

gasted by such an exercise in bad taste mounted in her honor. She collected Meissen ware — or was it Ming vases? — a taste only old money has had the time to develop. Probably the only things of Friedman's she'd acknowledge are the series of neo-rococo wall sconces made of editing film and glass knobs. They're simply lovely, and you wonder what they're doing here.

Also at the Victoria Room are the constructions of **Stephen**

Shackelford, Friedman's fellow Southlander. Shackelford has made Rube Goldberg-like contraptions of PVC pipe, a plastic pipe used in plumbing, that carries water to potted plants. Perhaps metaphors for California's extravagant irrigation system, they seem a lot of sound and fury signifying not too much — or is that the point? Gallery hours: Victoria Room — Friday through Saturday, 12 to 6 p.m. Four Walls — Wednesday through Saturday, 12 to 7 p.m.