



PLATE SEVEN *Provence—Remembrance of things past*

For much of the past decade, Chandler's paintings and subject matter—jewel toned, joyful renditions of butterflies, beetles and exotic circus performers—appeared at odds with the art world's prevailing taste. Taking cues from such unlikely precedents as JMW Turner, George Stubbs, John James Audubon, Henri Matisse, Ludwig Bemelmens, David Milne, Tony Duquette, David Hockney and Robert Kushner, Chandler's romantic works were anathema to the visceral theatrics of much late 90s art. Admittedly, Chandler has developed slowly as a painter, moving through an arsenal of art historical and cultural references. With its florid brushwork, lively pastel colors and rococo chinoiserie, her early paintings had an exaggerated, over-the-top quality that often mixed incongruous decorative style with fanciful illustration. Just when it seemed that the work was becoming grating and undigested, however, Chandler's additive strategies began to pay off. More painterly and gestural than previous work, these recent canvases with their looser

technique add a new facet to her exhilarating synthesis of disparate art historical periods and painting styles. Significantly, Chandler casts a wide net, and is likely to find a use for the most mundane and seemingly irrelevant zoological details, as well as art historical and botanical facts and phenomena. She shifts modes so seamlessly as to create a kind of compulsive and convulsive beauty. This is intuitive painting with full knowledge of the possibilities inherent in paint. Accordingly, Chandler provides substantial pigment under rich glaze, as well as frenzied brushwork executed in paint thinned down to the consistency of watercolor applied in staccato-like strokes. The dynamic surface creates a mood as elegiac as it is elegant, sorrow for what has gone and enjoyment of what has not. Chandler's palette, however, is garish. She's prone to carnival hues: gelatinous blues, ludicrous greens, cotton candy pinks and frivolous yellows. Everything seemingly floats in milky white or stained and dappled grounds.