IN REVIEW

moreover, which gives his sculptures a Lego-like appearance, clearly indicates that verisimilitude was not his aim). Also, instead of laser cutting, Horton chose to carve each foam layer individually from its printout with an X-Acto knife, which is plainly evident in the jagged, tentative appearance of the finished products.

Horton's practice of, as he calls it, "extensive deconstruction/reconstruction" touches deliberately on a number of significant, established ideas. As pure studies of movement, his sculptures have blatant associations: foremost with Eadweard Muybridge and cinema's operative principle, apparent motion, but also with cubism, particularly Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* (itself influenced by chronophotography). But Horton's labour turns in on itself; not only is he employing newfangled technology to demonstrate what's already been demonstrated about materialized motion, but he is also counteracting the apparent ease with which we currently digitize ourselves. Noticing the crudity of Horton's work is key: it proves that in every replication lies a loss, and that advancement—or creation, for that matter—is invariably built on tiny, superficially imperceptible gaps and blemishes. **DAVID BALZER**

KRISTAN HORTON *Rolo* 2005 Styrofoam and laser prints
70 cm x 1 m x 1.75 m

Installation view of Geoffrey Farmer's *A Pale Fire* 2005
PHOTO RAFAEL GOLDCHAIN

Geoffrey Farmer / Joëlle Tuerlinckx
THE POWER PLANT, TORONTO

This exhibition at The Power Plant, curated by Reid Shier, examined the Western concept of an art gallery in relation to the space it occupies and its function as a public communicator. Two works were created specifically for this: one by Geoffrey Farmer, from Vancouver; the other by Joëlle Tuerlinckx, from Brussels.

Tuerlinckx created a work entitled *NO"W" (no rest, no room, no things, no title)*, for which she stapled large sheets of white paper to the walls of the gallery. Her modus operandi was to interact with the personality of the space, producing ephemeral marks like graffiti text and capturing incidental effects of lighting or architecture. The sheets of paper were then removed, cut down in size and bound into books.

It seemed as if Tuerlinckx wished to merge with the space, challenging the viewer to discern if she exists. The process she initiated tantalized our insatiable demand for a fixed frame of reference and yet denied us this, presenting instead an emptiness full of intent. Her interaction with the space maps the perimeters of the gallery in a very literal manner, thus binding her to a fixed notion of reality despite the transience of her endeavour.

The faux nihilism of Tuerlinckx's project was echoed in Geoffrey Farmer's installation, an altogether more engaging work both visually and intellectually. *A Pale Fire* consisted of a megalomaniacal pile of used furniture, placed in neat rows that exemplified the ordering neurosis of materialist culture. The Old World bureaus, desks, chairs and cupboards carried a residual charge of emotional nostalgia, evoking a retrogressive desire to reclaim the past and save the objects from their fate, a fate that included being ceremoniously stripped down and burnt to a cinder before the charred remains were crushed and made into ink that found its way to the printed page in declamatory texts like "disorder is treachery" and "orderliness is next to godliness."

Farmer established an elaborate process of stripping the furniture of its defining functional items, like hinges and brackets, before sandblasting away varnishes and stains. The egalitarian scheme reduced the objects to equivalent pieces of wood all destined for incineration in a designer fireplace that was suspended from the ceiling by a very elongated flue. The fireplace, designed by Dominique Imbert, swivelled to accommodate the commodious human desire for warm conversation around a fire.

Despite Farmer's satirical deconstruction of our Western instinct for creating processes, building things and attributing value to them, his work also stands as a deeper metaphor for fascism and the whole societies it has condemned to death and methodically dispatched. On the whole, he powerfully used the gallery medium to communicate a social concept. In the process, he overshadowed Tuerlinckx's gentler contribution. **ASHLEY JOHNSON**
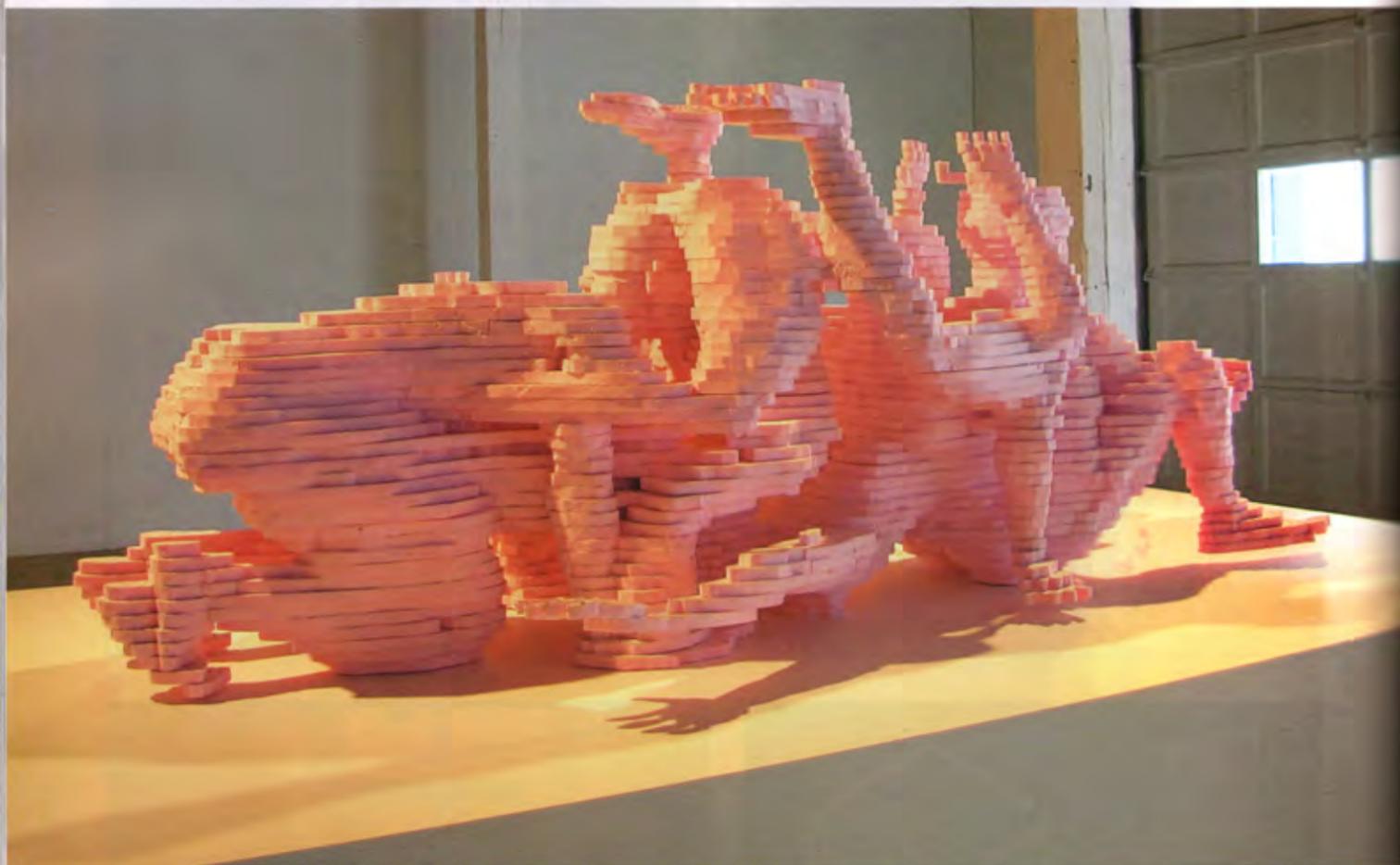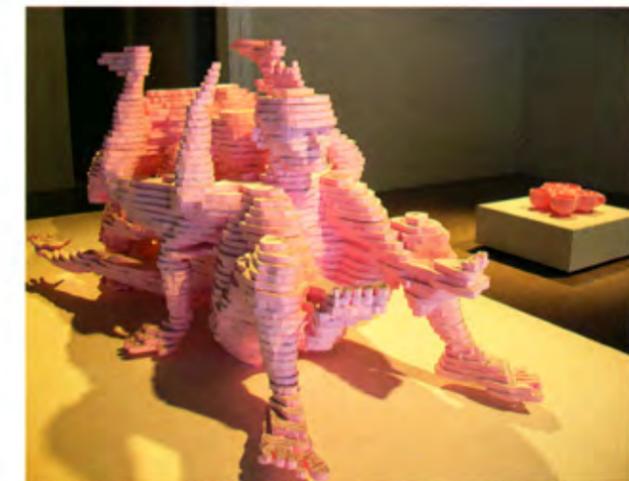

KRISTAN HORTON *Rolo* 2005 Styrofoam and laser prints
70 cm x 1 m x 1.75 m

Kristan Horton
MERCER UNION, TORONTO

That Kristan Horton's other Toronto exhibit last year, "Dr. Strangelove Dr. Strangelove," charmed so many people seems a bit anomalous given his latest effort, Mercer Union's strikingly bare "All At Once." Curiously, the latter is without a doubt more typical of Horton's output, and, to be frank, the former's pop orientation—Horton's shot-by-shot reconstruction of Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* using household items—belied its fidelity to tedium, sloppiness and redundancy, three of the most important conceptual preoccupations in Horton's body of work thus far.

"All At Once" is incredibly unassuming: it's just three layered foam structures made from 3-D computer software (there are many out there; Horton chose one called Blender) that allows for a frame-by-frame conflation and materialization of, in this case, mundane movement. *Bebida* was made from video footage of Horton picking up a coffee cup; *Copo* records the cup as it is picked up and put down on a tabletop; and the larger *Rolo*, the show's ostensible attraction, demonstrates the phases of a somersault.

But behind this laconic facade lies the cold intrigue of process. As with his previous work, *Oracle*—a machine that turns books on tape back into books—Horton takes the long way around. For instance, he's selected fairly rudimentary, open-source software; other programs, like Autodesk VIZ, though more expensive and technically demanding, could have produced faster, cleaner-looking models (his use of comparatively thick slices,

FARMER ENGAGES THE GALLERY'S FUNCTION AS A PUBLIC COMMUNICATOR