

Art in Review

'Things Fall Apart All Over Again'

Artists Space
38 Greene Street, SoHo
Through June 4

As a rule, Artists Space doesn't show student work. But it is making an exception with two concurrent master of arts thesis exhibitions by 2005 graduates from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y.

One show, organized by Cecilia Alemani and Simone Subal, is of sculpture, which by now, of course, has many tradition-challenging, media-crossing definitions, a few of which are in evidence here in work by three remarkable young artists. Carlos Bunga, who is based in Portugal, built a full-scale, one-story house from cardboard and packing tape in the gallery, painting the interior in soft pastels. Then, in a performance-style act of destruction, he demolished the piece by throwing himself against its walls until they collapsed, leaving behind only a cardboard footprint and photo documentation.

Architecture, intervention, process and ephemerality are also components in the work of Michael Sailstorfer, who was born in Germany in 1979. His sculpture exists almost entirely on film or in photographs. For one piece, seen in slides, he transformed parts of four mobile homes into a stationary house. And for a fantastic time-lapse video made with Jürgen Heinert, he painstakingly disassembled a wooden cabin, burning each board in the cabin's iron stove, until all that remained was the house-devouring stove itself and a smoking chimney.

The work of the New York-based Heather Rowe adheres more closely to conventional sculpture, but also pushes it toward architecture. In her sprawling structures of sheetrock,

Plexiglas and wallpaper, interiors and exteriors seem to exchange roles. One piece suggests both a Palladian facade and an altar screen, another a transparent house with a doorway fitted with a guillotine blade.

Installed around this show is the second one, a four-artist video exhibition organized by Yasmeen M. Siddiqui. The variety of styles and themes is notable, from text-based work by Hassan Khan, to a balletic piece by Beatriz Viana Felgueiras, to Moataz Nasr's 're-enacted version' of a classic Egyptian film of political resistance, with Cagla Hadimioglu's beautiful meditation on daily life in a mosque being most directly in tune with the sculptural theme.

Ms. Siddiqui, like Ms. Alemani and Ms. Subal, has chosen her artists well. I look forward to encountering all three curators, now on the threshold of promising careers, again soon.

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