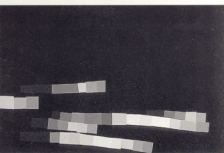


# PAPER PRODUCTS

In conventional art making practice, paper is thought of most commonly as the surface upon which drawings are made. *Paper Products* presents work by ten artists working in the Chicago area who subvert our preconceived notions of paper's "traditional" role. This exhibition includes an inventive array of elaborately assembled wall pieces, carefully constructed sculptural objects and site-specific installations that celebrate the simple prosaic wonder of this inexpensive, easily manipulated and richly variegated material.

Daisy Mitchell and Danielle Gustafson-Sundell, two artists living in Evanston, use traditional and industrial papers to create evocative site-specific installations that define and affect the space they occupy. Paper, typically a three-dimensionally challenged material, doesn't keep these artists from making meticulously fabricated, room-altering sculptures of surprising subtlety and whimsy. Daisy Mitchell embellishes funky strips of heavy watercolor paper with paint blobs and arranges these sculptures into wall-hung

volumes reminiscent of cartoon waterfalls. The compression of the strips into a column-like mass increases its weight and its forceful spill to the floor. Danielle Gustafson-Sundell addresses the architectural parameters and shifting light of the Octagon Gallery with a floor-to-ceiling, sewn-and-perforated, Tyvek screen entitled (*small explosions*), *i think i love you*. Although this gently disruptive filter obstructs complete access to the space, it forces the



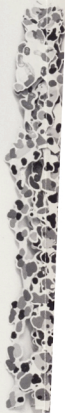
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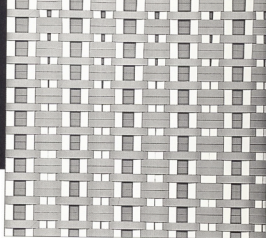
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viewer to recalibrate one's perception — directing and focusing attention to previously unnoticed characteristics of this light-filled environment.

Evanston native Mark Murphy and Chicago artists Lora Lode and Anna Kunz make provocative objects and installations from pre-used packaging materials. The surfaces of Mark Murphy's small "paintings" are pieced together from puzzle-cut parts of cardboard convenience-food containers and applied to panel; as a result, the source is often camouflaged and a newly calibrated formal structure emerges to redraft painting's language of color, surface and mark. Lode's ethereal wall work entitled *General Mills, Kellogg, Post and Quaker Oats* ironically diffuses the reductivist doctrines of minimal art with the most prosaic of materials — discarded cereal boxes. By carefully and laboriously sanding off the colorful graphic identity of the product, Lode imbeds a new formal aesthetic into these otherwise abject objects and presents them, newly elevated, on long shelves. Anna Kunz approaches her floor installation of painted and embellished cardboard gift boxes entitled *Aerial View* in much the same way that she constructs her richly textured oil paintings. By fixing and stacking these modules into a simple, but orderly, structural terrain, Kunz maps the contours of the gallery architecture into topography reminiscent of landscapes seen from an airplane. In addition to the particular conceptual strategies inherent in the work of the artist, there is also an inventive and viable reuse of our consumer-culture material waste; this reformulation suggests that beauty and resonance can be found in the most unexpected places.

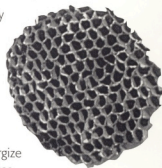


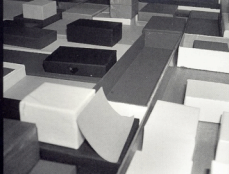


Michelle Grabner, Chicago artist, writer and educator, and Nicola

Axford, an installation artist who received her MFA from University of Illinois at Chicago and now lives in England, take paper into the domestic environment and exit with a reinvented sense of utility and familial harmony. Michelle Grabner uses preprinted paper strips to weave intricate structural "drawings" that underscore the elementary nature of color and pattern. The paper "mats" that result align themselves aesthetically and conceptually with issues of predictability, order and control, and reframe the notion of use and decoration in the domestic setting of everyday life. Nicola Axford's hilarious, yet artful, full-sized living room set entitled *whatever happened, happened, what happened?* is made from cheap construction papers and photographic tape and suggests the aftermath of some goofy but gentle cataclysmic event. We encounter not the place where something actually happened, but the aftereffect of our flawed memory.

Carrie Gundersdorf and Chris Patch, both Chicagoans, apply the traditional techniques of collage and assembly to uniquely colored and intricate visual works, but do so in radically different approaches. Gundersdorf structures her works of paper — initially studies for her ambitious oil paintings — with a sense of visual order, spatial ambiguity and surface articulation in mind. The completed pictures resonate optically; physical surface and color modulation come together in these ambitiously abstruse pieces to energize the perceptual experience and pleasure the eye. Patch makes





delightfully quaint handcrafted narratives out of carefully cut, multi-colored construction papers. Like one's first hand-made valentine, Patch's illustrations and the large hanging "bouquet" are sweet and funny, and remind the viewer of the sentimental beauty of nostalgic reminiscence.

Finally, John Arndt's discreet paper sculptures remarkably replicate organic forms and natural occurrences, and suggest that paper — when reduced to its most essential properties — can be molded and completely transformed into newly configured conceptual and material associations. His ideas and methods come from the natural sources he investigates. *Wasp's Nest* was created the same way a wasp would create its

own nest — by wetting, mashing and sculpting the material until the structure emerges into a useful, architectural form.



Dan Devening  
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