sculpture

JUNE 2007

NEW YORK

## Christian Maychack
## Jeff Bailey Gallery

**Above: Christian Maychack, installation view of "All the Slow Forces,"**

Varying in scale and material, Christian Maychack's playful collection of sculptural oddities encompasses both architectural and abstract entities seemingly suspended in a process of metamorphosis. By incorporating recurring forms and traditional building elements into his works, Maychack infuses conventional gallery space with an imaginative and dynamic narrative.

Three of the seven works in his recent exhibition are termed "scenarios" and center around restructured two-by-fours (*An Alternate Scenario for a 2x4x1 #1-#3*, 2006) – one extending from the wall, the other rising from the floor, and the third enclosing a corner. Each sculpture includes amorphous elements composed of polystyrene and gator foam that help shape the overall and intrinsic narratives of the works. By decontextualizing familiar objects, Maychack provides us with an alternative approach to viewing this otherwise solely functional building device. In so doing, he challenges our perception of constructed environments, forcing us to take notice of their elements.

Through color gradations, texture shifts, and the blending of object and surface, he animates these static parts, creating the illusion of breathing organisms that possess their own characteristics, energy, and habits – fictitious "architectural beings." This process of personalization enables viewers to cultivate a direct relation to the objects, albeit through passive experience.

References to growth and evolution are inherent in many of the works, as is readily apparent in the second "scenario," which springs up from the floor to reveal a linear, quasi-Art Deco, white growth extending from beneath. The sculptures variously embody the illusion of pulsating beings arrested in the midst of a process of transfiguration – on the verge of a complete shift from objects of utility to expressions of pure individuality.

This show also included a departure for Maychack: two pedestal sculptures (*Elsewhere and Afterall* and *Nothing as Sudden,* 2006) display similar ideas of enigmatic transmutation, yet are dissociated from a recognizable point of reference. Rather than relating to an architectural component, they are abstract, conjuring loose associations to celestial and natural objects in an ambiguous condition of transformation. In juxtaposing these two bodies of work, Maychack presents contrasting glimpses into his concept of evolution and perception of space wherein the works with architectural references function as anchors for understanding the more abstract sculptures.

Maychack's works interact with their surroundings in both material and form. By converting building materials into supposed living beings and nebulous forms, he effectively assembles an inspired narrative that enlivens mundane spaces, in turn broadening the limits of observations and evoking a novel spatial experience for the viewer.

*-Yaelle Amir*