

Press Releases

January 2005

Edward Mayer: Tracing Change

On view at the University Art Museum

January 25 through April 3, 2005

Opening Reception: Tuesday, January 25, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

ALBANY , NY--- The University Art Museum is pleased to present an overview of sculptor Edward Mayer's thirty-year career. *Edward Mayer: Tracing Change* brings together past work and four new site-specific installations. For more than two decades, Mayer has been building impermanent installations that transform space and order perception through the use of simple geometries and everyday materials such as pre-fab shelving, wire fencing, and wood lathe strips . Also included in the exhibition are video and photographic documentation that highlight Mayer's continuous and overlapping investigations into the mutable definitions of space, process, and temporality. Among the only discrete objects on view will be Mayer's early experiments in movable forms. These wood and Formica cube structures can be reconfigured to form a variety of different sculptural options and provide an important reference point from which to trace Mayer's later installation process. Beginning with his stacked wood lathe structures of the late 1970s, his building methods have remained relatively unchanged: Mayer pre-orders his materials, arrives on the exhibition site to build his piece, and when the exhibition comes down, he sells or warehouses his installation materials for reuse at a future site. This method has left him free to develop his ideas almost anywhere the opportunity has presented itself.

With each installation Mayer has expanded his vocabulary of forms-- by the late 1980s references to huts, walls, towers, and tunnels began to take on the metaphoric proportions of small cities. Also, the architectural elements of a given site, including its existing windows, columns, and ventilation systems, began to play an expanded role in Mayer's effort to redefine spatial relationships on his terms. Increasingly Mayer has directed his interests toward the viewer's perception of these spaces by providing ample opportunity to enter, move through, and survey his installations from multiple perspectives. His introduction of materials with an inherent transparency such as common wire tomato planters and metal fencing cylinders have made his installations more permeable than his earlier enclosed wood lathe structures. Yet at the core of even his most ephemeral installations are Mayer's signature concerns regarding the repetition of modular forms, the reuse of building components, and the impermanence of his building process.

Mayer's evolution toward a new openness and transparency will be well documented in *Tracing Change*. Mayer will revisit elements of *Portolan* (1985), a previous site-specific installation at the University Art Museum in which he filled the entire first floor of the Museum with various stacked wood

lathe structures. *Tracing Change* will include working drawings, documentary photographs, and a video of the *Portalan* installation as well as documentation from other installations done over the last twenty years.

Mayer will once again respond to the Museum's open, two-story floor plan with four new site-specific installations; this time he will use his newly-found retinue of space defining materials which include vinyl shelving units, steel tomato frames, zip ties, wire fencing cylinders, and circular chrome steel display racks to redirect our attention to aspects of the Museum's space that normally go unnoticed.

Edward Mayer has had solo exhibitions at Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts; Mattress Factory in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Zolla-Liebermann Gallery in Chicago; Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin; the São Paulo Bienal in São Paulo Brazil; Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, New York; Green Gallery, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York; and the New York State Museum in Albany, New York. He is the recipient of numerous awards and grants including two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships in Sculpture and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Sculpture.

Edward Mayer began teaching sculpture in 1970 at Ohio University in Athens , and has continued to teach (since 1983) at the University at Albany , State University of New York where he heads the Sculpture Department.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

For further information or visual materials, please call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at www.albany.edu/museum.

MUSEUM HOURS: Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. , Saturday and Sunday noon to 4 p.m.