

Gustavo Godoy



Gustavo Godoy
*Fast-Formal Object:
Big White*
2009
Mixed media
5x9x5 m

Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, USA

If a Minimalist sculptor were to join forces with a climbing-frame design impresario with a flexible outlook, their collective efforts might resemble Gustavo Godoy's *Fast-Formal Object: Big White* (2009). The press release describes the sculpture as a 'mixed media construction' and nothing could be more apt.

Built to the extremes of a gallery space that barely contained its jagged geometries, one had the uncanny - though doubtless delusional - sense that by simply looking long enough and hard enough at the object, one could piece together the process by which the sculpture was made. Though *Fast-Formal Object: Big White* has a superficial formal relationship to other obviously constructed sculptures by the likes of Björn Dahlem and Mark Handforth, Godoy's work is notably less composed and lacks the art-historical clues and conceits that play through the work of those two artists.

Rather, Godoy's sculpture seems improvised and ad hoc, as if it found its form in a specific time and in a specific space, relative to the capricious logic of its own construction. Certainly Constructivism and Minimalism are obvious points of formal reference, but Godoy has only borrowed a sensibility from these movements, not an ideology. If an ideology is a play, it is one of levity and interactivity not often found in the austere corridors of, say, Minimalism. When a viewer derives a haptic sensation from an

encounter with a Minimalist object, that bodily sensation is filtered through a trenchantly visual experience: the object is to be beheld not held, as it were. In other words, the body's sense of itself in relation to the object is always figured through an optical experience.

Godoy's work, on the other hand, is predicated on a haptic encounter that entails touch, leverage, contortion, climbing, sitting, crouching etc. To encounter the work, then, is to do so in a fully corporeal fashion. In anticipation of the game viewer/participant, the climbing-frame designer in Godoy has integrated safety measures into the form of his sculpture: white nets provide a safeguard where one might tumble through the tangle of geometries to the floor, while strategic passages of padding mitigate the painful effects of sharp corners. Form, in other words, follows function in a very direct, pragmatic sense. It is also notable that the sculpture is lit from within using neon bulbs and track lighting that at once dramatizes the contours of the construction while asserting an internal necessity evident in the logic of the sculpture's overall construction. Looming and graceful but nevertheless inviting, *Fast-Formal Object: Big White* suggests a fresh and promising confluence of formal and social concerns.

Christopher Bedford

Raphael Hefti
A Portrait of the Bullet
(detail)
2009
Baryt fibre paper from
original archival negative
60x50 cm

