

Proposals for the Typical House!

Allan Wexler's expressed affection for toys and his celebration of the "act of building" was clearly evidenced in his recent show at the Ronald Feldman Gallery in New York. Formally trained, first as an artist then as an architect, Wexler continues to work as artist/architect and carpenter through the hands-on craft of the saw, hammer and nail. Sculptural in nature, this small sampling of work from 1985-88 synthesizes architectonic notions with abstraction and wit.

Not unlike a child with toys, Wexler manipulates structure and space while playing his own intimate game of scale. In "Little Office Building #2" the scale is reduced to that of closet, which unfolds to form a screened workstation.

Smith, Martin. "Different by Design: Proposals for the Typical House." *Iowa Architect* (May/June 1988): 5.

Little Office Building #2, 1987 Pine and Enamel



In "Scaffold Furniture for Dining", the ritual of eating is elevated such that each piece of the dining set requires its own structure. The "Chair Building #2" enlarges the scale of the chair to that of a building complete with enclosure and operable windows. Wexler introduces yet another layer of scale through the expression of connections and fasteners required for construction.

This exhaustive exhibition entitled "Small Buildings, Furniture and Proposals for the Typical House" also included 68 altered photocopies of the plan of a typical suburban house, plus models of 25 of the proposals. Said Wexler, "Whenever I do a project, I want people to know I spent a lot of time on it." In "Chair-a-Day" this readily acknowledged debt to the act of construction has so consumed Wexler that he spon-

aneously constructed one chair per day for 15 days, beginning each day and chair with a fresh thought. This type of ambitious and healthy exercise in design is one that we could all benefit from in our continuing efforts to stimulate new and refreshed ideas.

MARTIN SMITH

Chair Building #2, 1988 Teakwood



Scaffold Furniture for Dining, 1988 Wood and Mixed Media



Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York
Photography: D. James Dee