

Allan Wexler

CITY GALLERY AT CHASTAIN AND
ATLANTA COLLEGE OF ART GALLERY

Atlanta

This engaging and smartly organized retrospective of Allan Wexler's sculpture and installations from the last two decades showcased a body of work that unites artist, architect, hobbyist, and craftsperson in their common urge to create. What seem to be playful reconfigurations of ordinary things, such as chairs and coffee cups, are actually Wexler's thoughtful and often humorous comments on form and function. Whimsical and sophisticated, Wexler's deconstructed objects unveil myriad functions that, although not always practical, are ultimately thought-provoking.

The show was divided between two venues. At the Chastain gallery, contraptions such as *Coffee Seeks Its Own Level* (1990) expressed the complexity of human relationships. In this work, four cups of coffee on a table are connected to each other by plastic tubing, so the coffee can only be sipped if the cups are simultaneously hoisted by their drinkers. Here, the laws of physics and the realities of social interdependence coincide.

Wexler's challenges to architecture's fixed perspectives were the focus at the ACA Gallery. *Twenty-Four*

Unfolded Houses (1997), for example, cleverly mocks the cookie-cutter approach to home-building. For this piece, Wexler shows how a tiny three-dimensional paper house can be reconfigured into 24 unique two-dimensional paper patterns, yielding a rich variety out of apparent uniformity. Also featured at this venue were color photographs documenting site work and larger projects. These photos—picturing whole kitchens on wheels and entire offices inside small sheds—captured Wexler's most stunning and ambitious work.

—Felicia Feaster



Allan Wexler, *Chairs* (detail), 1998, acrylic on canvas, canvas on wood, dimensions variable. Atlanta College of Art.