

Allan Wexler

RONALD FELDMAN

Artist-architect-designer Allan Wexler does not so much ask what architecture can do for us, but rather what is our place in a constructed universe that often seems to get ahead of and beyond us. This strong exhibition, titled "Works," effectively showcased Wexler's teasing wit and sensitive object making.

The artist's meticulously crafted 16-square-foot *Too Large Table* (2002) incorporated cutouts that allowed visitors to sit and have intimate yet isolated conversations inside the table's outer contours rather than outside of them. In the 2002 piece *Wall (I Want to Become Architecture)*, a freestanding wall bears the three-dimensional impression of the artist's seated form, making architecture, furniture, and human figure indistinguishable. In *Ramp* (2001), a lacy, gracefully arched 5-by-48-foot wooden construction stretched from one side of the gallery space to the other and seemed to fade into the distance. Wexler provokes viewers with the spatial complexities of his constructions.

He makes us wonder: is this progression or regression? These forms, with their elaborate spatial conundrums and fanatical

detailing have an offbeat, beatific silliness that nicely contrasts with their serious capacity to conjure faded 20th-century utopian ideals and visions of 21st-century endgame scenarios. In *Incomplete Continuous Stair* (2001), for example, a ten-foot model made of two-ply mat board stretching toward the gallery ceiling produced a lightning rod of associations: Tower of Babel, Tatlin's model for the Monument to the Third International, the doomed World Trade Center staircases? Wexler's references to infinitely expandable or contractible space can be read as a metaphor for the flowering and decline of human potential.

—Dominique Nahas



PHOTO: DENNIS COWLEY

Allan Wexler,
*Wall (I Want
to Become
Architecture)*, 2002,
Sheetrock,
plywood, pine,
108" x 65½" x 36".
Ronald Feldman.