
Art in Review

■ On the dubious comforts of home ■

Allan Wexler

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts
31 Mercer Street
SoHo
Through Feb. 8

Allan Wexler is an artist-turned-architect who also makes furniture. Several facets of his versatile sensibility are on view in this packed, relentlessly inventive show. The full-scale architectural piece is a mobile home that can literally be packed in crates. With the kitchen reduced to a well-stocked alcove on wheels and the living room nothing more than a mammoth audiovisual console, it is both a clever model for recession-era housing and a comment on the dubious comforts of home, American style.

The furniture design, by contrast, ranges from merely eccentric to bizarre. Armchairs resembling torture devices are made to hold their occupants in hinged body casts. Sitters at a dinner table are physically connected through a series of tubes hidden in their ominous-looking hooded seats. In several small architectural maquettes, tables take on an organic life, their legs growing sideways through the wall of a house or running under the floor to drain sewage away.

Mr. Wexler's work has long reflected his fascination with domestic social rituals, dining chief among them, and the varieties of often perverse human interaction they encompass. Whether the gatherings he posits in this show suggest companionable oc-

casions (as in the case of a full-scale sukkah table with legs planted in pots of sprouting grass) or the dinner party from hell (as in the case of shirts sewn like prone bodies to a tablecloth), they have an insistent zaniness that is certainly entertaining, though a little bit of it goes a long way.

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