

Palace/stadium configuration—each with its own character: some rigidly architectonic, others softer and irregular. The play was not simply interior versus exterior: certain areas opened to the ceiling, allowing the viewer's head to surface as if from under water for a survey from above while the body remained encased below.

In *Parabiosis*, Buster created a rare sculptural hybrid that can be experienced as both object and space. One incarnation of the form was incomplete without the other. And the experience outlasted mere entertainment: whether burrowing through the chambers and their succession of vistas, squeezing between wall and sculpture, or simply sitting beneath the sheltering canopy, viewers could not help but question the paradigms of the full-scale built environment—how it does and does not relate to the human body as architectural form—and wonder whether biological growth patterns and processes might have some important lessons for the way we build. Intentionally or not, Buster achieved a suspension of reality that offers insights for the real world.

—Twylene Moyer

San Francisco

Nick Bertoni and Laetitia Sonami

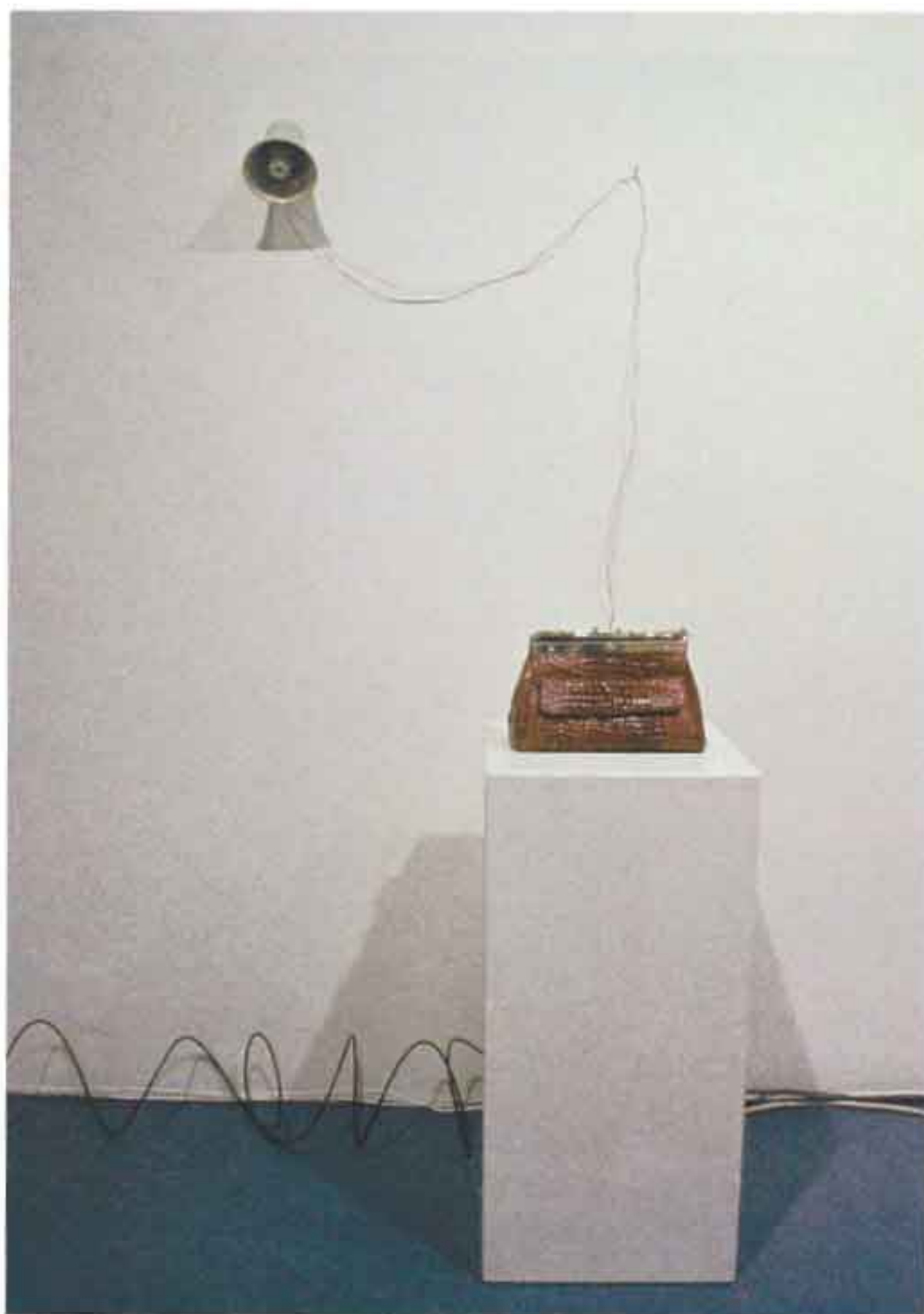
New Langton Arts

Bags hold many things, especially metaphors and cultural attachments. In the interactive exhibition "Bags," object and association are brought to life via digital and mechanical modes. Nick Bertoni and his Tinkers Workshop of East Bay youths constructed machines that reside within the bags, setting off motion and meaning. Integral to the sculptures is an audio component created by Laetitia Sonami. The tracks include specific noises—sighing, rustling, voices, snapping—that amplify the objects' movements, as well as tightly edited ambient noise and excerpts from street interviews. The result is a total environment

in which bags rule the world but remain empowered by human presence. The variety of sacks and satchels testifies to their ubiquity and importance in everyday life, but the specific choices of both bag and sound fill them with wit and socio-political implications.

Case in point: two office chairs, each seating a briefcase, one hardtop black, one leather. The attachés open and close rapid-fire,

preferences: Louis Vuitton and Gucci, the latter edited and repeated down to a series of sonorous sneezes, rendering consumerism comedic. Similarly, *Food Bags* carries the weighty implication of global commerce. Empty burlap rice, potato, and coffee sacks lie flat or crumpled, while others shake and hop upon viewer activation—akin to the dance of supply and demand on the world stage.



Nick Bertoni and Laetitia Sonami, *Alligator Purse*, 2002. Alligator bag, pedestal, pneumatics, and speaker, 61 x 41 x 21 in.

emitting a sound not unlike distant machine guns—those of big business? There are voices, but it is unclear if they come from within or from the neighboring *Alligator Purse* (all works 2002), whose faux hide and snapping golden jaws menace. Here, we listen to an elderly woman prattling on about her purse and

Directly opposite is *Cabinet of Loners*, a cold metal and glass vitrine displaying rarefied evening bags. A silver and gold clutch opens and shuts as if to yield a pearl; feather and beaded purses lie limp, revealing their limited capacity and purely ornamental decadence. In the same vein, the eponymous purse in *Chanel* sits

atop a pedestal around which cluster several low-budget vinyl shoulder bags. Each grounding is filled with a blue light that intermittently emits a TV-like glow, inciting nervous chattering and sighing from above.

A large black garbage bag is suscitated by a hose attached to a medical ventilator. Hissing and listing, *Breathing Bag* roams the floor tethered to its lifeline. Nearby is a stack of random medical machines and a mess of old-fashioned doctors' bags. One opens, and a metal arm emerges bearing an apple, while an ambient heart-beat thumps throughout the galleries. A statement on the multivalent miracles of modern medicine? Similarly clever is *Crawler*, a handicapped golf bag that hobbles along on its stand as if on crutches. Next to it, *Backpack*, with a child's name in black marker, drags itself around, suggesting the unwieldy weight of today's elementary-school workload.

In many of the installations it is clear which motions are triggered and which are hardwired, but not so for all. And the ambiguity between action and reaction adds complexity to the works, reminding us that while we may create things, they often take on a life of their own whose meaning and effects are way beyond our control.

—Laura Richard Janku

Middletown, Connecticut

Yannis Ziogas

Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University

In Yannis Ziogas's "Ballads," toy-like intimacy vaults across vast spaces in a wonderfully whimsical manner, marrying the homespun, acrobatic tinkering of Alexander Calder to the visual clackety-clack of Paul Klee's *Twittering Machine* and playing it out across the venturesome cosmos of a *Star Wars* epic. There is something cinematic about this site-specific installation and something decidedly epic. There are four "Ballads"—*The Ballad of Lost Sight*; *The Ballad of the Forgotten Tree*; *The Ballad*

of the *Toy Train of the New Agitatsia*; and *The Achilles' Shield Ballad*. Each one is framed in a separate language of material, incident, and reference; all of them are episodic in character and gauged to the larger tensions of connection and separation.

Together, they orchestrate a dance with far-flung adventure and homeward-tugging nostalgia—and provide us with a sense of how it must feel to be Greek,

expanse of the gallery space through a miniature pair of binoculars. His "world" is a fragile, gap-strewn network of engineered contraptions—white bridges and rope ladders—suspended in the air (as are all the ballads) by a rainbow network of colored cords. He stands guard, scouting the unfamiliar, even impossible passage. No mere traveler, certainly no conquistador, he tells us by his uniform of his connection

Toy Train makes reference to the propaganda trains of Russia's October Revolution—promotional tools of a utopia that never happened. Running diagonally across the 90-foot length of the main gallery, this ballad is constituted as a toy train passing endlessly back and forth on a straight track in regimental precision. Its "cargo" is a bit of biomorphic abstraction (a little Jean Arp-like lump), perhaps reminding us here at the

across actual oceans and invisible distances, centering on what is missing. *Achilles' Shield* is not, in fact, a representation of a shield at all, but rather a sort of existential violin case. Ziogas describes this piece as "architecture"—a kind of house for the *idea* of the great hero's shield. Built from dowels and cut boards and painted white, suspended in a separate, vertical space, this work is one of 13 iterations of the subject, 12 of which are on concurrent exhibition in Athens. Once again, Ziogas plays out the rich contradiction: the ligature is space—and the important fact of connection is the yearning across distances.

—Patricia Rosoff



Yannis Ziogas, installation view of "Ballads" exhibition at Wesleyan University.

that is, to live perched on the shores of a vast, beckoning, treacherous, and watery frontier. Ultimately, in his first solo exhibition in the United States, Ziogas (a Greek artist who has shown extensively in Europe) gives us a surprisingly poignant re-thinking of Homeric legend.

In *Lost Sight*, for instance, a tiny red figure (a uniformed toy soldier) appears at various junctures, peering across the 90-foot

to home. Like Gulliver among the Lilliputians, regarding the cunning enterprise of this little soldier/sentinel, we stand waist-deep in the oceans that constitute his expansive battlefield.

In *Forgotten Tree*, the prospect is more planetary. Slender dowels/poles in zigzag succession are jointed together, bridging a series of honeycombed "planets" that act like flanges for this precarious, multi-jointed passage. Scruffy little "trees," fabricated out of bunches of fresh oregano, mark a kind of sailor's landfall amidst the pitching and yawing of the wooden trail.

beginning of a new century of the utopian dreams of Modernism. Taken in a purely visual context, the effect is like a three-dimensional Kandinsky. The blue line of the train constitutes an anchoring slash, low in the field; the inadvertent appearance of the little red soldiers above it has the effect of so many colored stars in a cosmos of abstract incident. But other meanings ride this train, too, and they are not impossible to read despite the ingenuous chuggity-chug of mechanical toys.

The fourth ballad takes more of a conceptual turn, operating

Miami Beach

"globe>miami<island"

Bass Museum

A unique artist-curated show, "globe>miami<island" rethought the way art is made, exhibited, and viewed. The more than 60 artists who participated have some connection to Miami and a notable cultural and age diversity spanning more than four generations and several continents.

Curator/artist Robert Chambers designed this "over-the-top" show to celebrate artists with positive, quirky, humorous, and deeply thought ideas. Bass Museum Director Diane Camber invited Chambers to curate a Miami-centered show to complement the Art Basel-Miami exposition in 2001. Although the museum was closed for repairs, its new 21,000-square-foot wing by Arata Isozaki provided a perfect showcase for large work and installation art. When Art Basel was canceled due to the events of September 11, the Bass decided to carry on, mounting a multicultural artists' counter-offensive.

Opening night was a lively celebration. Near the new entrance, quasi-religious, roughhewn outdoor towers looked down on a wrecked car blowing bubbles from its watery grave in the water court. Reportedly, several police officers and observers