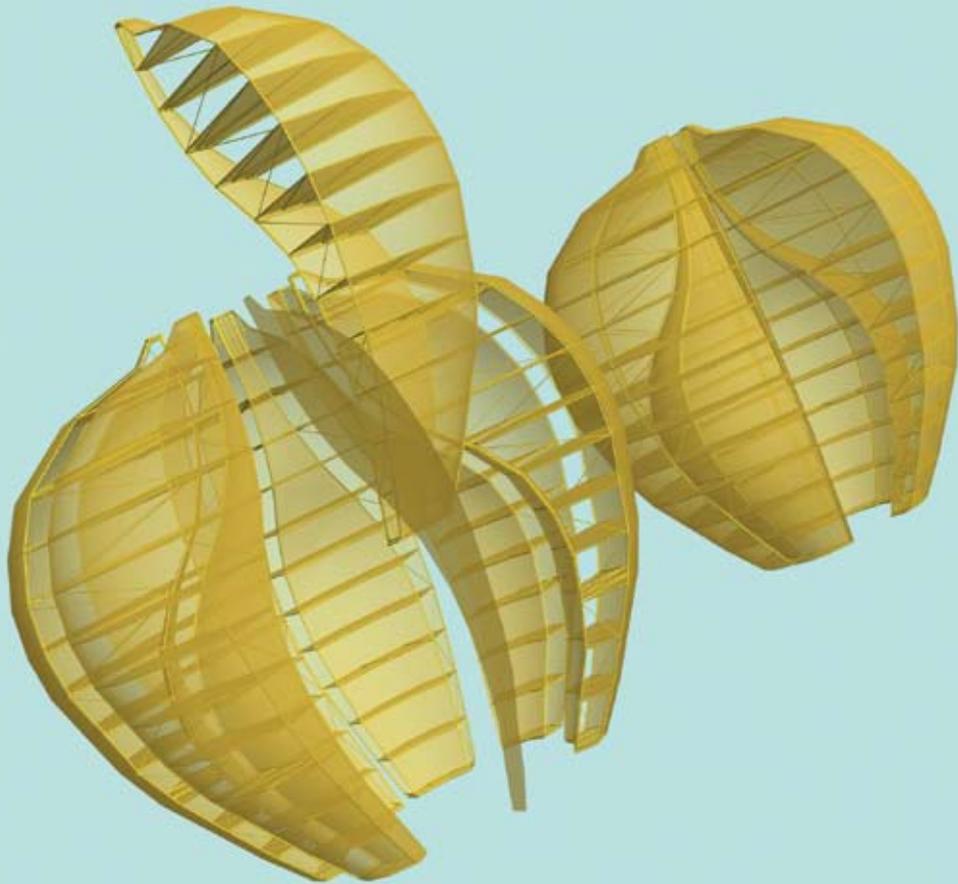
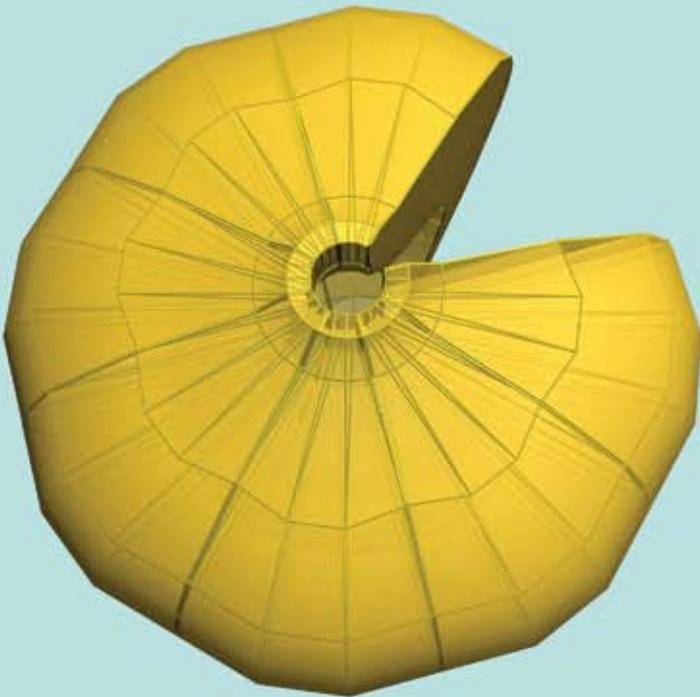
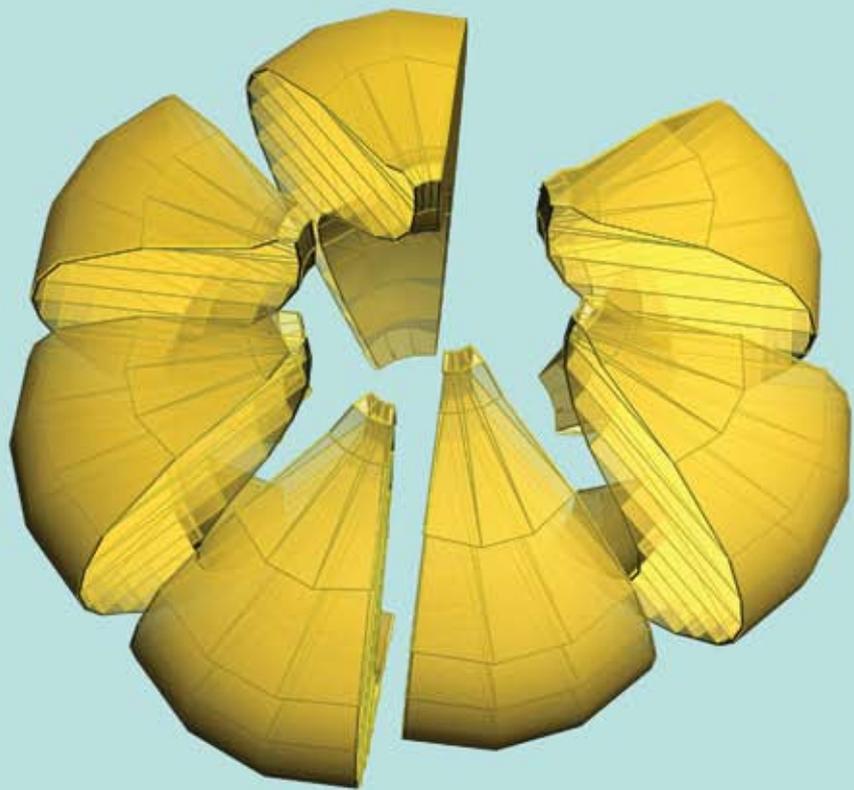


Highrisevessels

KENDALL BUSTER









Highrisevessels

KENDALL BUSTER

PATRICK & BEATRICE HAGGERTY MUSEUM OF ART

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY







HIGHRISEVESSELS

KENDALL BUSTER

October 7, 2005 - January 8, 2006

Patrick & Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art

Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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Catalogue Photography: Kendall Buster

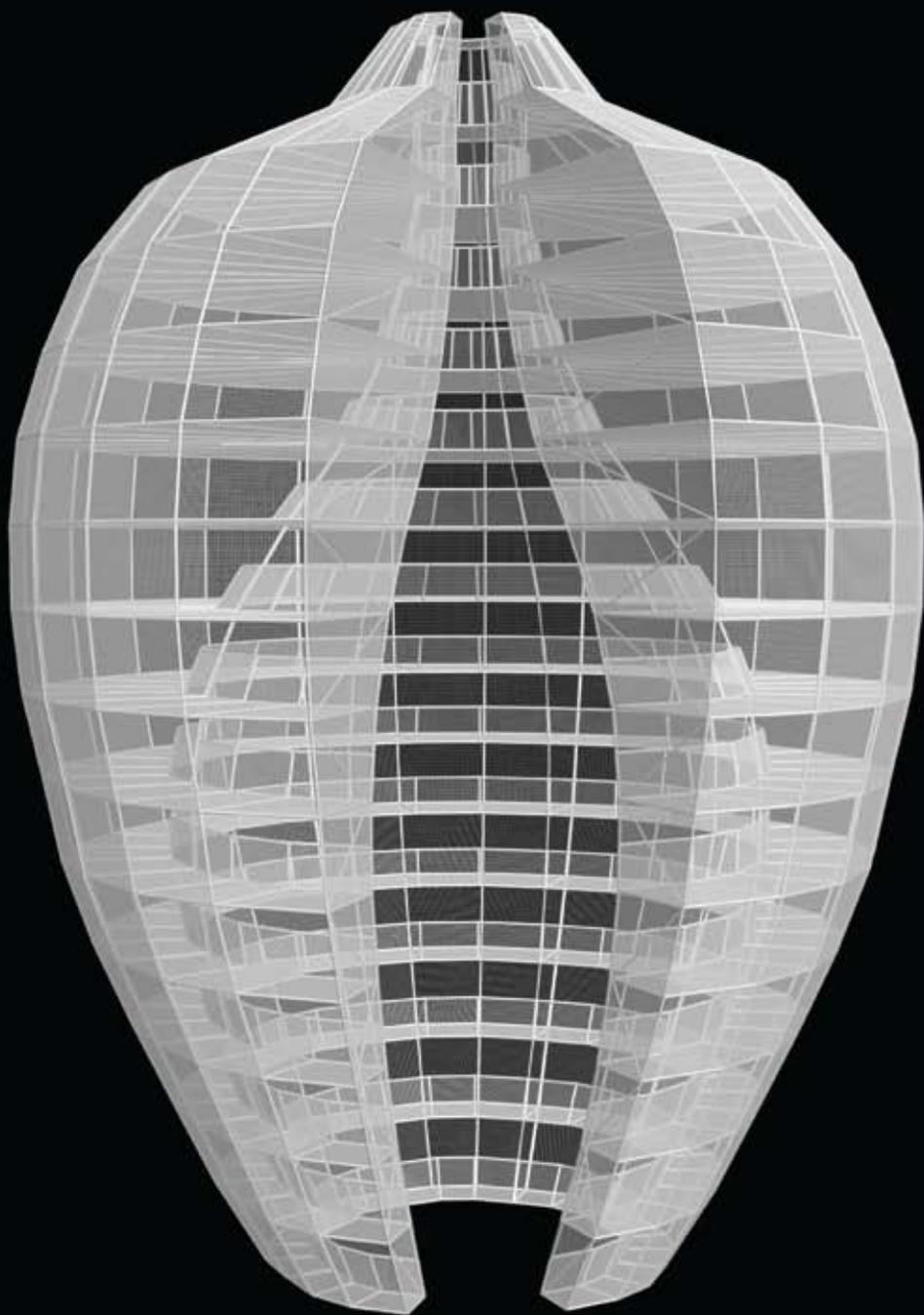
Digital Graphic Images: Mark Teare

Catalogue Design & Layout: FLAT International

Catalogue printed by Special Editions, Hartland, Wisconsin







Kendall Buster: Sculptures

Curtis Carter

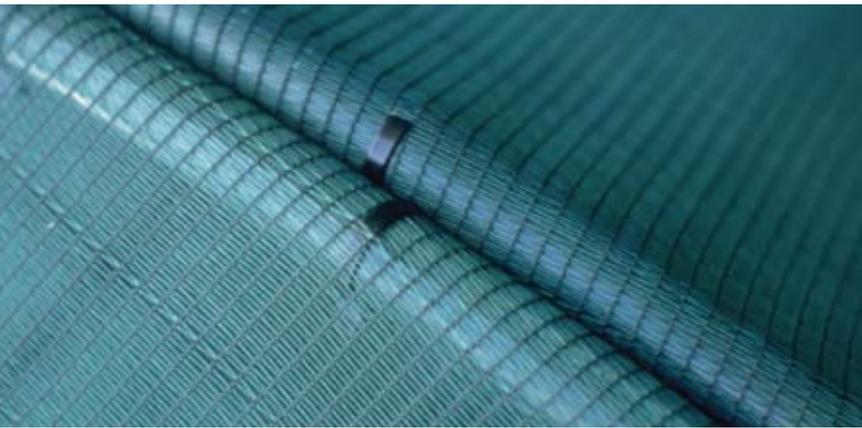
Sculpture is characterized in the Encyclopedia Britannica as an “art of representing observed or imagined objects in solid materials and in three dimensions.” Viewed in this traditional sense, it refers to art works recreating in a medium the natural appearances of objects or ideas in the mind corresponding to these features. Today, the practice of sculpture has evolved beyond representational stone carving and bronze casting to include a variety of abstract constructions using fabricated materials including plastics, cloth and even light itself. Kendall Buster’s sculptures honor portions of the classical understanding of sculpture. They are elegant formal three-dimensional constructions embodied with classical beauty, but are not solid, weighty objects. Rather, their open airy spaces are often constructed of visually transparent membranes that allow the spectator both visual and physical access into their interiors. Buster’s forms do not mirror already existing forms. However, their formal structures constructed of steel armatures, cloth and cables reference the symmetry and regularity found in natural biological structures.

Like other artists today including sculptors and architects, Buster’s work tends to blur the distinction between sculpture and architecture. She is not concerned with the traditional uses of sculpture as a subordinate part of architecture, or

left *Whitehighrise*, 2005
digital image

below *Subterrain*, 2002
(below view)
pvc plastic, pins
Lamar Dodd School of Art, Athens GA





as a complement to architecture. Rather her aim is much more ambitious. Her sculptures suggest a type of scale model for imaginary transient architecture. Apart from their scale and mobility, they resemble innovative modern architecture of the current century, more than traditional sculptures.

My first experience of Kendall Buster's sculptures took place in 2000 at the Kreeger Museum in Washington, DC. *Garden Snare* (1998), built for the Kreeger Museum's enclosed garden site, has "two accessible tall chambers with openings that frame a view of the sky."¹ Access into the trap-like structure requires the participants to stoop and slip into the space where movement is tightly controlled by the structure. Passage through the space requires the viewer to rethink how to move through the space. The process can be disorienting.

My second live encounter with Buster's sculpture involved *Parabiosis* (2002) at Fusebox Gallery, also in Washington, DC. Here, the model shifts toward a cluster of related forms that interact in a closed space, again requiring that the participants stoop and crawl to invade the inner spaces of the piece. On both of these occasions, the participants were challenged to rethink their own mental attitudes toward sculptural space and the interaction of their own bodies with these spaces. Visitors both young and older approached the experience timidly at first, but seemed excited once inside the sculptures and refreshed afterward.

The two works created for the Haggerty Museum exhibition *Yellowhighrise* (Model #2), and *Whitehighrise* (Model #3), both made in 2005, continue Buster's approach to modeling imaginary architecture with each sculpture



operating as an autonomous work. In this respect, these two works differ from Buster's recent modular works with the units arranged in grids, such as *Column Field* or *Model City*, or other new projects with freer structures that deny the modular grid.

According to the artist, *Yellowhighrise* is split like a fruit to permit access into the inner chamber. The chamber itself simulates an atrium ringed with balconies for twelve floors. It is constructed with a steel armature covered in yellow greenhouse shade cloth attached with cable-ties. The shade cloth forms the exterior membrane, which divides interior and exterior spaces. *Whitehighrise*, a variation on the previous work with white greenhouse shade cloth and identical structural materials, is rigidly symmetrical in its composition, yet more easily accessed than *Yellowhighrise*.

far left *Garden Snare*, 1998
shade-cloth, steel
Kreeger Museum,
Washington, DC

above *Parabiosis*, 2002
(interior & exterior views)
tracing paper, steel
Fusebox, DC
Artists Space, NYC



Both of these works are intended as a continuation of the artist's investigations, examining the interface of sculpture and architecture. These works can be read as vessels, or as imaginary buildings. They reflect the tension in contemporary art over sculptors who aspire to be architects and architects whose buildings appear to function more as sculpture than as functional architecture. The fact remains that their main purposes differ in important respects. Sculptures in the form of imaginary buildings stimulate the imagination and invite the viewers to experience themselves and their spatial environment in new ways. Real buildings aspire to similar aesthetic aims, but they succeed only when they also serve their intended functional purposes.

1. Kendall Buster, "Artist's Notes," Kendall Buster: *Inventory of Imagined Places*, Exhibition Catalogue, The Kreeger Museum, Washington, D.C., (April 4-June 21, 2003,) p. 70.

left *Yellowhighrise*, 2005
(assembly)
shade-cloth, steel
Houston Museum for
Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX

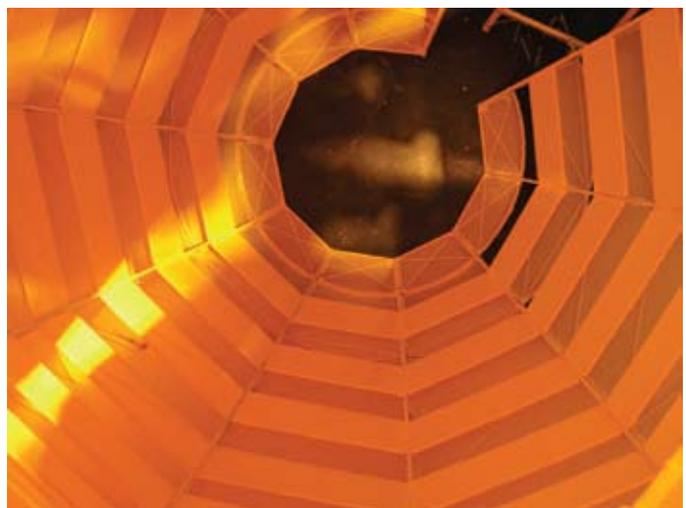
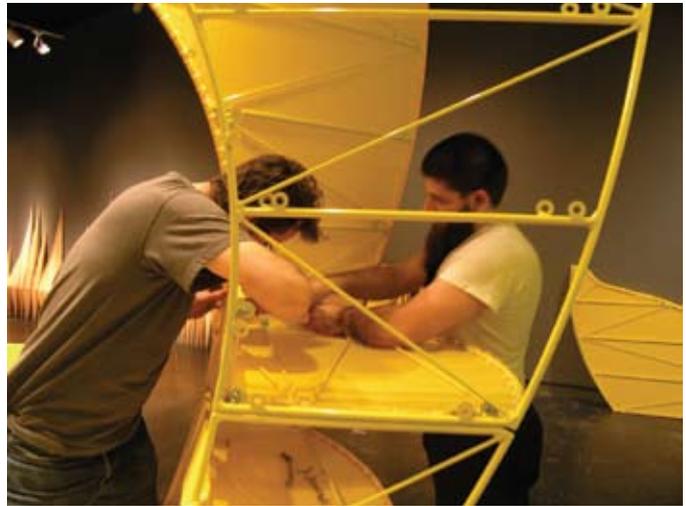
below *Yellowhighrise*, 2005
shade-cloth, steel
Houston Museum for
Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX

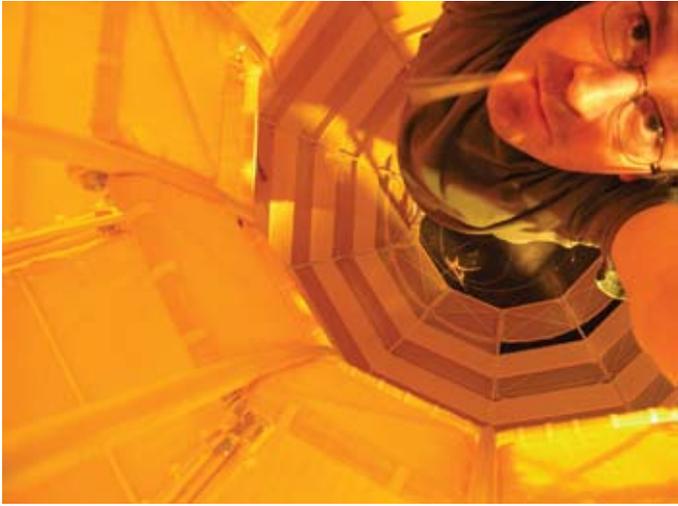






below Yellowhighrise, 2005
(assembly)
shade-cloth, steel
Houston Museum for
Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX

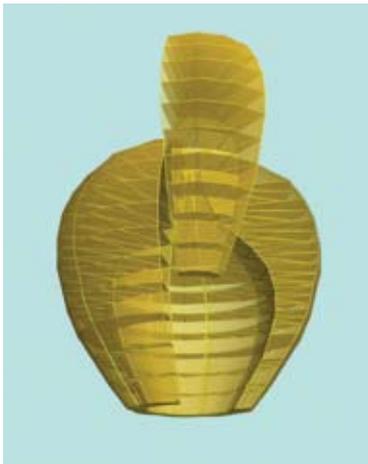




right *Yellowhighrise*, 2005
shade-cloth, steel
Houston Museum for
Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX

below *Yellowhighrise*, 2005
digital image

far below *Yellowhighrise*, 2005
shade-cloth, steel
Houston Museum for
Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX



Yellowhighrise: Notes

Kendall Buster

Yellowhighrise (Model #2) is a kind of scale-model for an imaginary transient architecture. Split like a fruit to create an entrance that offers access to the interior space, its inner chamber suggests an atrium ringed with balconies for twelve floors. *Yellowhighrise* is a continuation of my investigations into the interface of object and architecture. It might read as vessel or as building.

As in previous projects, this curvilinear semi-transparent model building has been designed and constructed to imply a membrane capable of swelling and retracting. Built in sections with visible fasteners, there is also the suggestion of a potential for disassembly and reassembly. Biological associations come into play, the structure referencing at once a pair of superimposed urns or bulbs, a high rise conceived of as fantasy hive.









Whitehighrise: Notes

Kendall Buster

Whitehighrise (Model #3) is a variation on *Yellowhighrise*. Here the structure is covered with a more transparent skin and rises an additional four feet. Like *Yellowhighrise*, I see this sculpture as a model for an imaginary tall building. But in spite of the fact that the structure is ridged and the form almost radially symmetrical, the membrane here is more porous, the boundary between inside and outside less of a barrier.

Both sculptures are almost radially symmetrical, I imagine these forms having been turned on a huge wheel, spun rather than built. But they were built, and are built every time they are moved. Together they are assembled out of over 300 sections, steel frames covered in greenhouse shade cloth.

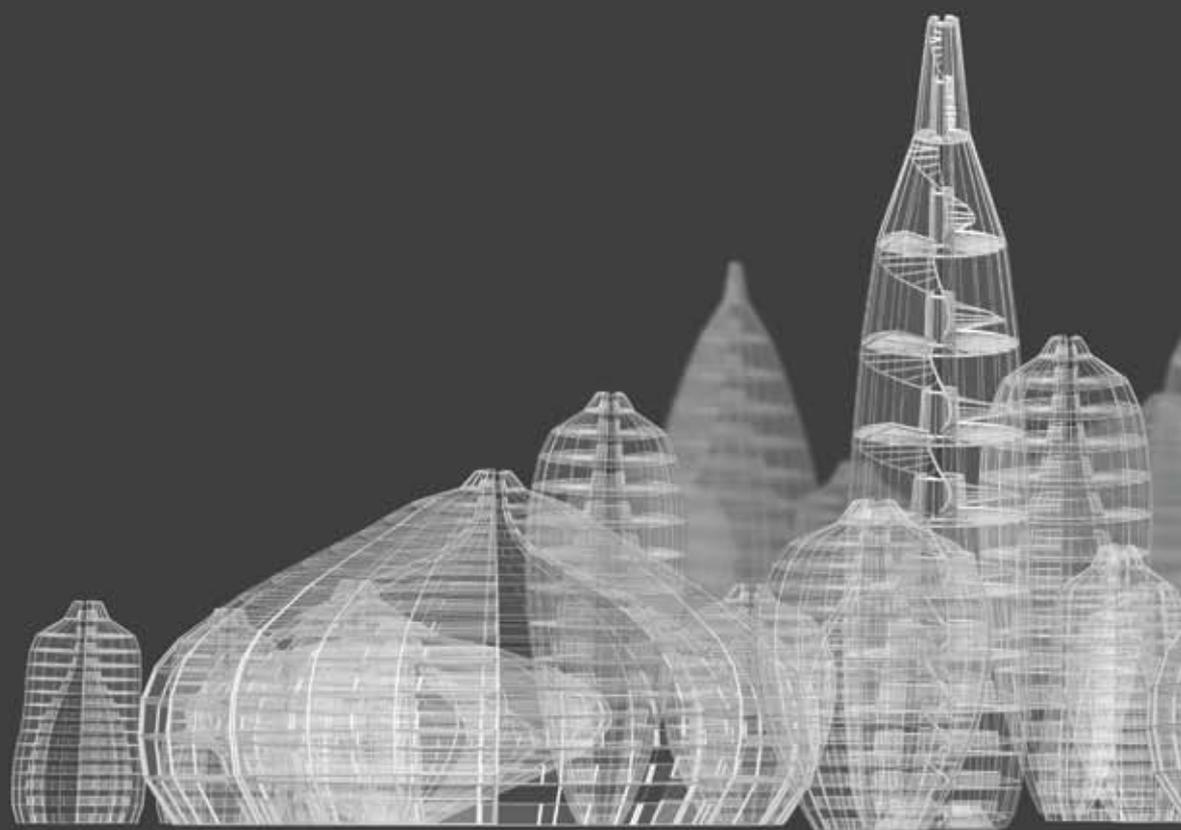
Any window is a charged site, the place where interior and exterior negotiate. This is true whether I am looking in, looking out, looking up, or looking down; whether I am looking up, or looking down; whether I am looking or being looked at. The circular opening at the top of a dome is its oculus. When the window is centered at the top of a dome it is like an abstracted single eye, a divine eye, and becomes the source of surveillance. Standing beneath such a window I am at once illuminated by benign light and caught in the act.

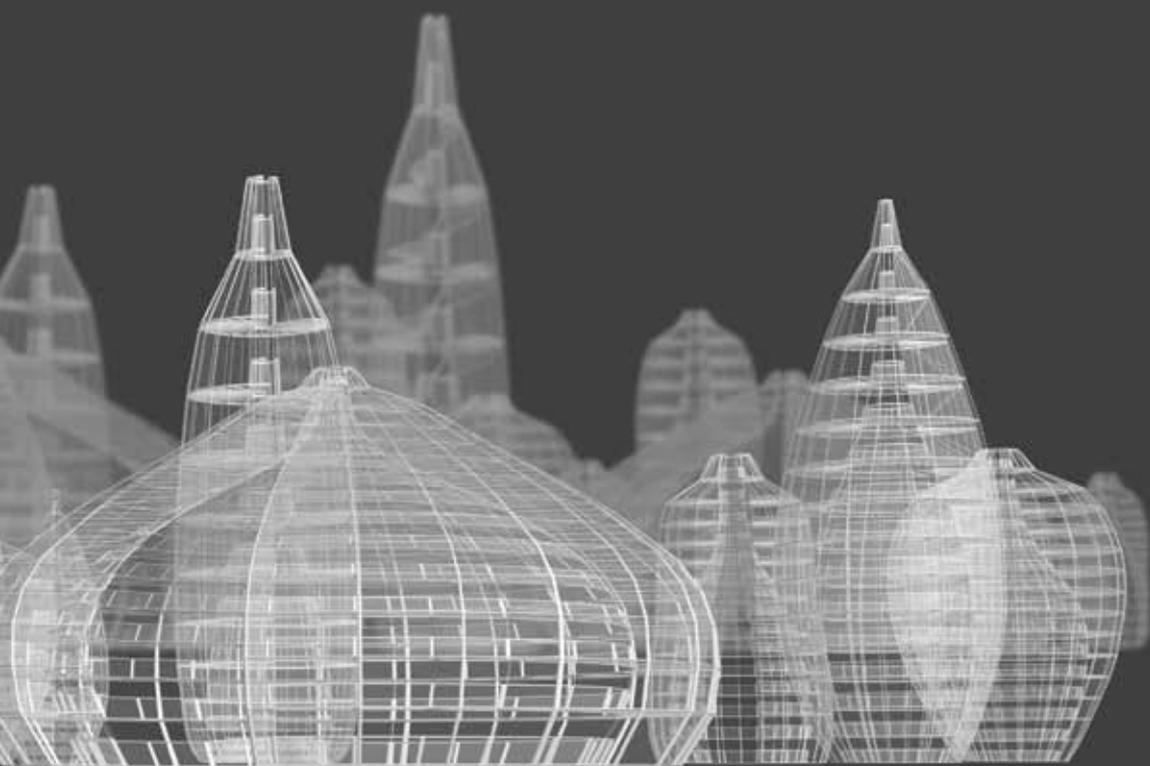
right *Whitehighrise*, 2005
shade-cloth, steel
American Academy of Arts and Letters, NYC

below *Whitehighrise*, 2005
shade-cloth, steel
American Academy of Arts and Letters, NYC

over *Whitehighrise*, 2005
digital image







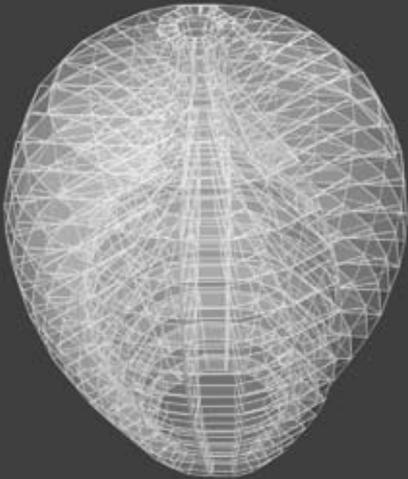
below *Whitehighrise*, 2005
(assembly)
shade-cloth, steel
American Academy of Arts and Letters, NYC



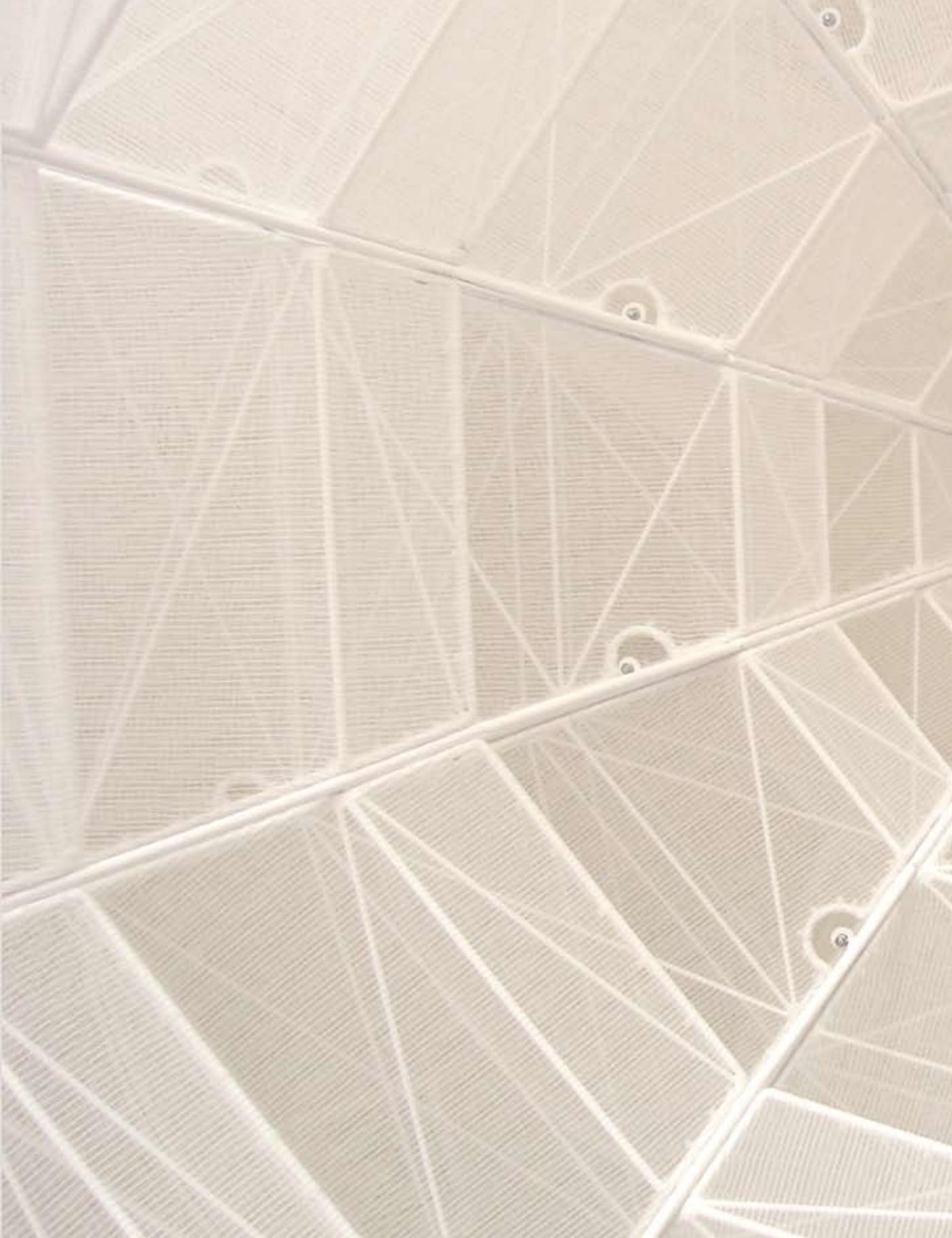


right *Whitehighrise*, 2005
shade-cloth, steel
American Academy of Arts and Letters, NYC

below *Whitehighrise*, 2005
digital image



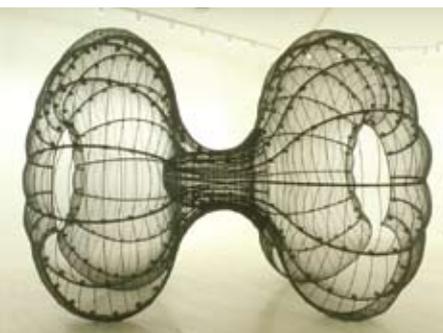












KENDALL BUSTER Biography

Education

- 1987 MFA Sculpture, Yale University, New Haven, CT
- 1984/5 Whitney Museum Independent Study Program, New York, NY
- 1981 BFA, Corcoran School of Art, Washington, DC
- 1976 BS, Medical Technology, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

Solo Exhibitions

- 2005 *Highrisevessels*, Haggerty Museum, Milwaukee, WI
Model City, Fusebox, Washington, DC
Model City, KZNSA (KwaZulu Natal Society for the Arts), Durban, South Africa
Yellowhighrise, Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX
- 2004 *Model City*, Drake University, Des Moines, IA
- 2003 *Inventory of Imagined Places*, Kreeger Museum, Washington, DC
- 2002 *Parabiosis*, (Architecture and Design Series) Artists Space, New York, NY
Subterrain, Main Gallery, University of Georgia, Athens, GA
Parabiosis, Fusebox, Washington, DC
- 2001 *Column Field*, Bannister Gallery, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI
- 1999 *Sitelines and Suitors*, Kemper Museum, Kansas City, MO
- 1998 *Garden Snare (Greenhouse)*, Kreeger Museum, Washington, DC



- 1996 *Calyces*, Baumgartner Gallery, Washington, DC
The Shell that Remains, Anderson Gallery, Richmond, VA
- 1994 *Snare*, Portland State University, Portland, OR
- 1993 *Uncertain Embraces*, McLean Project for the Arts, McLean, VA
- 1990 Baumgartner Gallery, Washington, DC
- 1986 *Blue Cube Apartment*, Diane Brown Gallery, New York, NY
Horizontal and Vertical, Middendorf Gallery, Washington, DC
- 1985 The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, PA
- 1984 Franklin Furnace, New York, NY

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2005 American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, NY
Material Terrain, Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, MO
Material Terrain, Santa Cruz Museum of Art, Santa Cruz, CA
- 2003 *Art Positions*, Miami Basel, Miami, FL
ARCO, Madrid, Spain
- 2002 *Comfort Zone*, Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, PA
- 2001 Fusebox, Washington, DC
- 2000 *Open Circuit*, NSA Gallery, Durban, South Africa
- 1997 The Bahnhof Westend, Berlin, Germany
- 1996 *Esculturas VCU*, Galeria ICPNA, Miraflores, Lima, Peru
- 1996 Goethe-Institut Washington, DC



- 1995 BAT Center, Durban, South Africa
1993 Sculpture Center, New York, NY
Vessels and Fields, Patricia Shea Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
Mitchell Museum, Mt. Vernon, IL
1992 *Confinements*, UMBC, Baltimore, MD
1991 *Recent Acquisitions*, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC
1990 *Melancholia*, de Adino Fine Arts, Washington, DC
1989 *Before of After Form and Function?*, White Columns, New York, NY
1987 *Darkrooms*, Artists Space, New York, NY
1984 Artpark, Lewiston, NY
1983 *Directions 1983*, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC
1981 *Options*, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, DC

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Acknowledgements

Curtis L. Carter

Director

The Haggerty Museum of Art is pleased to present Kendall Buster: *Highrisevessels*, an exhibition of site-specific sculptures and their preliminary designs by the 2005 Academy of Arts Award recipient Kendall Buster. Before becoming an artist, Buster studied Medical Technology and indeed many of her sculptures reflect her continued interest in biomorphic form. She received a BFA from the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC, an MFA from Yale University, and participated in the Whitney Museum Independent Studio Program. Buster has shown her large scale site responsive architectural works in many venues including The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the Kreeger Museum in Washington, DC; Artists Space in New York City; The Mattress Factory in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; The Kemper Museum in Kansas City, Missouri; the Bahnhof Westend in Berlin; and the KwaZuluNatal Society for the Arts in Durban, South Africa. *Whitehighrise* (Model #3) shown here at the Haggerty Museum was the work chosen for the American Academy of Arts and Letters prestigious award. Buster currently works in Richmond, Virginia and is an associate professor of sculpture at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Highrisevessels is the most recent in a series of contemporary exhibitions at the Haggerty Museum of Art. Previous exhibitions in 2005 include Eve Sussman: *89 Seconds at Alcazar*; *Journey of the Spirit: The Art of Gwendolyn*; A. Magee and John Newling: *British Conceptual Artist*.

The exhibition *Highrisevessels* could not have been possible without the help of many individuals. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the artist for her collaboration with the Haggerty on this exhibition. Kendall Buster would like to thank her friends and fellow sculptors, Ledelle Moe and Jesse Burrows, for their tireless work in the studio and Mark Teare for his invaluable role in realizing the computer sketches. She would also like to recognize her husband, Siemon Allen, for his ongoing creative collaboration and his enormous support in the construction of these works, the installation at the Haggerty, and the design of this catalogue.

Funding for this exhibition was provided by the Milwaukee Arts Board and the Marquette University College of Arts and Sciences Andrew W. Mellon Fund.

