

MURRAY GUY

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SHIRLEY TSE

9 September - 21 October 2000

Polymathicstyrene

Shirley Tse's sculptures are made exclusively of various plastics. This man-made substance, infinitely adaptable, strong and light, is both surface and structure, ubiquitous yet alien. Used to pack, protect and contain, it is also the residue of process, the industrial surplus of function, the overlooked material between objects.

In *Polymathicstyrene* Tse has meticulously carved patterns into blue polystyrene, which extends in sections as a shelf around the gallery at hip height. As one looks down at the surface, these forms convey a sense of reduction and enlargement simultaneously. The hollowed-out contours create various metaphorical associations. In part they insinuate a topographical view of the Earth's surface, molded by natural forces. The more geometric forms suggest cities, from ancient ruins to modern urban infrastructure. Areas continually shift from dark to light, solid to vacant and background to foreground. The eye traces out different pathways across these planes, zooming out one moment to imagine an aerial view of a canyon or plateau, zooming in the next to the microscopic level of computer circuitry.

Whereas in the past, artifacts reflected the human hand that made them, the largely machine-made objects and synthetic materials of today rouse a different response. Tse's work shows a confluence of history and technology and compares the speed and accuracy of machine manufacture with the more animate fluidity of artisanal carving. Polystyrene has little weight or texture and offers small opposition to the shapes imposed upon it. This neutrality, uniformity and morphic propensity, however, creates a parity of significance amongst the forms and so a flexibility of interpretation. *Polymathicstyrene* reveals the pragmatic aspects of processing information, whilst encouraging imaginative interaction.

Shirley Tse lives and works in Los Angeles. This is her first solo show at Murray Guy.

Murray Guy is located at 453 West 17th Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Gallery hours are 10am - 6pm, Tuesday - Saturday. For further information please call Margaret Murray or Janice Guy at 212-463 7372