



Growth, Bookies pens and milk crate, 2006-2007

Untitled, cable ties, 2007

Shell, Cardboard boxes, 2007

When an artist elects to use found objects in their work, how much of the histories of those objects find their way into the work? Does a seemingly-abstract sculptural form, created from hundreds of bookies' bios become infused with the resonances of gambling, faith, hope and loss? Does collecting and collating these distil the resonances? Or does their migration from useful, used objects to art object translate their meaning also?

de Buitlear is interested in these questions, and also in the arbitrary nature of the objects' discovery and re-presentation. Writing about the work, Peter Richards quotes Victor Burgin to point out that the "arbitrariness of concepts of art... has a positive social function." Art's ability to play with the fixities of identity and history, and the meanings acquired through purpose and usage is the liberating thing here. Meanwhile, the artist's own miniature origami forests of trees, or villages of paper pyramids that rise from red plastic crates seem to suggest a hopeful note of useful fantasy too.

Despite the potential for the obsessional in his work (hundreds, thousands of objects gathered and laid out), there is a fluidity and a *beauty* to the constructions and arrangements that makes space for *beauty* in these fascinating pieces.