

Scott Rogers – Miniature Sears Towers

In the exhibition *Miniature Sears Towers*, Scott Rogers presents three models of the Sears Tower. They are built out of cardboard, material that crudely replicates the shape and size of its product, acting as its double, simulacra. Rogers's work not only unleashes the metaphorical power of cardboard, but also its universal utility. Much like the product, cardboard is perpetually made and remade, turning from box to pulp, from pulp to box, driven by the capitalist machine. This is a movement to nowhere, a movement at rest. Like a circle, it is stability itself, sustained by the consumer's faith in the product. Similarly, when encountering a replica of a Sears Tower one only encounters its shell, its slogans and empty promises, its demand for loyalty, its monumentality. But as the viewer stands in front of these megaliths, it is the fragility, the imperfection of the towers which overwhelm one's experience. One recognizes the materials' susceptibility to damage and decay, everything here is built on unsureness. Each of these models is an attempt at replicating the other: the first is a prefabricated custom-made sculpture, the second is created from discarded cardboard; the third is assembled from boxes sent from the artist's studio in Calgary. The piece literally participates in the Capitalist system of distribution, but goes beyond its simple re-staging. These empty boxes are not carriers of products but utilize their very emptiness to articulate a predominantly formal reading by exposing the dynamics of the distribution system. Such a system is engineered behind the closed doors of boardroom meetings, but once it is set to motion it becomes a system with its own momentum, which may appear stable to the consumer, but which develops chaotically. For this reason it is almost by chance that these boxes become replicas of the Sears Tower, as if it was the result of a random act by a warehouse employee. In this way Rogers does not attempt to reactivate the building's symbolic power, nor is he trying to subvert it. Instead, he shows that the creation of meaning is unavoidable, that it is created everywhere even in the emptiness of a cardboard box.

But the productive factory-like flow has a cut off point, a death, which in a sense is still within repetition. Once the exhibition is over Rogers's work will be recycled. Such an action is a liberation from the chorus of a boring song, a moment which craves for a clean slate. Later this cardboard will perhaps carry a product and be resurrected within the Capitalist machine, as every action is absorbed into a larger sphere, disappearing within its ebb.

Wojciech Olejnik is a Toronto/Berlin based artist, who occasionally publishes his writing about art, most recently in *C Magazine* and *Canadian Art*.