

CHAREST-WEINBERG

C E

C R E A M

10 CURATORS

100 CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

10 SOURCE ARTISTS

PHAIDON

ROB FISCHER



CHAREST-WEINBERG

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30 Yards (Minor Tragedies Dissected)

2005, steel, glass, chairs, row boat, pickup truck bed, airplane fuselage, trailer, pipes, lights, fan, plywood, wood flooring, papers, paint, 15 x 4 x 4.4 m Installation, Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, New York (2005-6)

Below

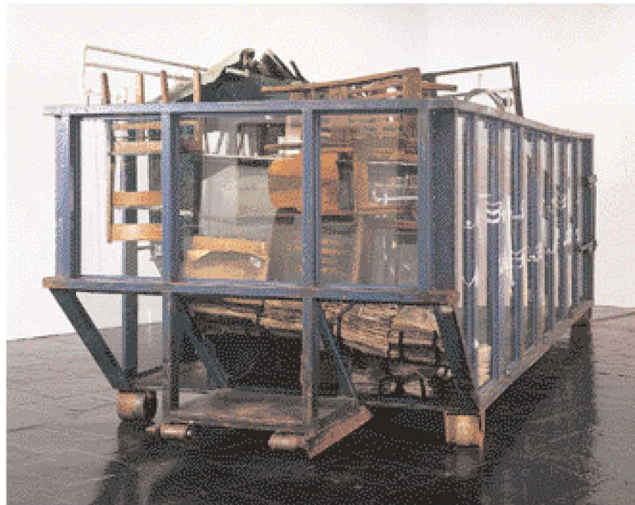
30 Yards (Minor Tragedies)

2003-4, mixed media installation, 2.74 x 2.28 x 6.4 m

Bottom

Ten Yards

2003, mixed media installation, 1.52 x 1.83 x 4.27 m



Born in Minneapolis, USA, 1968. Lives and works in Brooklyn, USA **Selected Solo Exhibitions:** **1999** 'Hiding Places for a Dense City', Art in General, New York **2000** 'Light/House', Franklin Art Works, Minneapolis **2004** Mary Goldman Gallery, Los Angeles **2005** Cohan and Leslie, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, New York **Selected Group Exhibitions:** **2004** Whitney Biennial, New York **2005** 'Trials and Terrors', Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; 'Greater New York', P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York **Selected Bibliography:** **2000** Michael Fallon, 'Reviews', *Art Papers*, May - June **2001** Kim Levine, 'Voice Choices', *Village Voice*, 6 November **2002** Jeffrey Kastner, 'Robert Fischer at Dee/Glasoe', *Artex*, May **2003** Valentina Sansone and Melissa Vo, 'Sculpture Forever', *Flash Art*, July - September **2004** Gregory Volk, 'Big Brash Borough', *Art in America*, September **2005** Martha Schwendener, 'Rob Fischer', *Artforum*, summer; Megan Ratner, 'Rob Fischer', *Frieze*, June **2006** Cecilia Alemani, 'Reviews: Rob Fischer, Whitney Museum at Altria', *Flash Art*, March - April

We attempt to explain our lives by citing the series of critical choices and dramatic moments that shift and divert our path. Usually minute unnoticed decisions shape our existence. Rob Fischer addresses these contingent, aleatory histories. His hybrid sculptures are amalgamations of parts with seemingly discordant functions, repeatedly built up, reconfigured and broken down into minimal, formally precise structures to include painted photographs, paintings on canvas, video and site-specific 'earthworks', systemically linked.

Fischer's sculptures have often incorporated vehicle parts or vernacular architectural elements familiar to the landscape of his native Minnesota – trailers, boats, cabins, trucks – for the material qualities as well as the individual stories embedded in their histories. For Fischer these forms are cartographic, mapping specifics and deeply linked to individual life while abstracted and symbolic of universal meaning.

Recycling previous sculptures is less about Fischer's embrace of found objects than a reflection of his organic process. Each reassembled work contains its own past, enacting what Fischer sees as 'the refusal of your own history to let you go'. For example, **30 Yards (Minor Tragedies Dissected)** (2005), a revision of a previous work **30 Yards (Minor Tragedies)** (2005), is the rusted, skeletal remains of a dumpster quartered and stacked to create four uniform frames, each filled with a careful composition of material, a kind of painting that integrates at least seven of his other sculptures, crushed into the whole. Sheets of bent metal intersect with scrap plumbing that angles in graphic patterns through the interiors; striped metal barrels protrude perilously from an upper section; old wooden beams, overlapping like shingles, comprise a side wall as formally precise as a geometric abstraction.

The work has become increasingly psychological, with fraught assemblages that are comfortingly familiar and yet disturbingly divorced from their assumed function or form. Delicately balanced between the intimate idea of an individual history, they also reference a more universal sense of time, place and desire – ideas of achievement and security, romantic idealism and failure. A main component of Fischer's solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum at Altria was **Your Vigor for Life Appalls Me** (2006) (the title is from a book of letters by noir comic master Robert Crumb), a spiralling, 30-foot sculptural assemblage comprised of the artist's characteristic forms – semi-abstracted closets, hallway sections and blank rooms – reminiscent of the biblical Tower of Babel, a parable warning against man's hubris. The story functions as a broader metaphor for much of Fischer's work overall, which explores the ideas of ambition, failure, humility and human will. Works such as **Mirrored House (Lake)** (2000-4) incorporate modified structures of transience and mobility – a boat hull, a cab from a truck, inverted dumpsters re-formed in glass and mirrors that become altars and monuments – as well as increasingly abstracted constructions of sheetrock and floorboards.

Fischer has referred to his work as 'footnotes to a larger story', allowing the central narrative to remain fluid, reshaped and configured by the space and the viewer's interaction with it. Focusing instead on the traces we all leave behind, he explores the futility of life's endeavours and the absurdity of human existence, while celebrating the extraordinary beauty of the messy, chaotic attempt that gives our lives significance. * **Shamim M Momin**

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Mirrored House (Lake)
2000-4, c-print, 101.5 × 76 cm



Greenhouse No. 4 (Repetitive Cycles)
2004-5, steel and glass greenhouse with plumbing, chair, terracotta pots, steel container, lights, watering system and plants excavated from Rob Fischer's personally cultivated swamp in Brooklyn, New York, 210 × 140 × 190 cm



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Your Vigor for Life Appalls Me
2005, wood, plaster, lights, wiring, plumbing,
flooring, scaffolding, 10.6 × 7.3 × 7.3 m
Installation, Whitney Museum of American Art
at Altria, New York (2005-6)

