

The background of the image is an abstract composition of large, overlapping, white fabric-like shapes that resemble inflated balloons or large, soft petals. These shapes are arranged in a dense, layered fashion, creating a sense of depth and volume. Interspersed among these white forms are several long, thin, orange-colored cylindrical objects, some of which appear to be made of wood or a similar material. These orange elements are positioned vertically and diagonally, adding a contrasting color and texture to the overall composition. A prominent red rectangular border is superimposed over the center of the image, framing the text.

Lee Boroson
Lake Effect

1-5"

11'-5"
A

7'-10"
C

4'-3"
E

10'

B

11'-5"
A

5'-9"
D

7'-10"
C

3A =

Lee Boroson / *Lake Effect*

Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center
April 6 to May 10, 2002

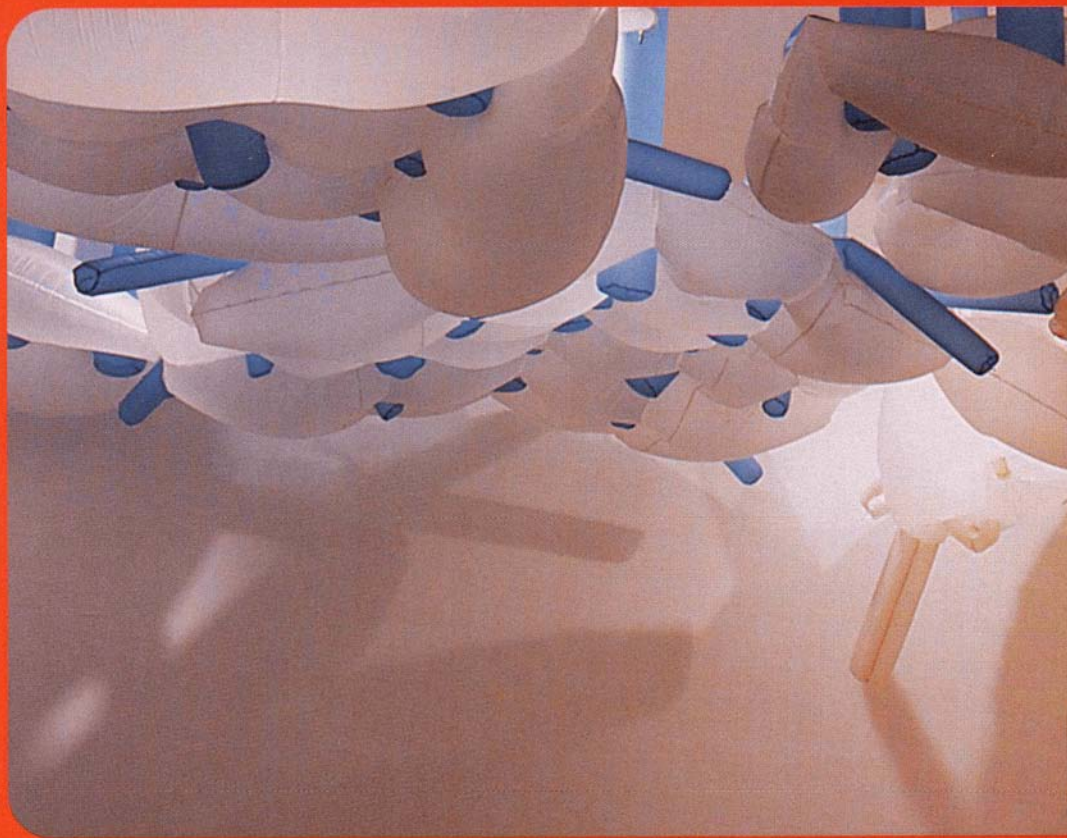


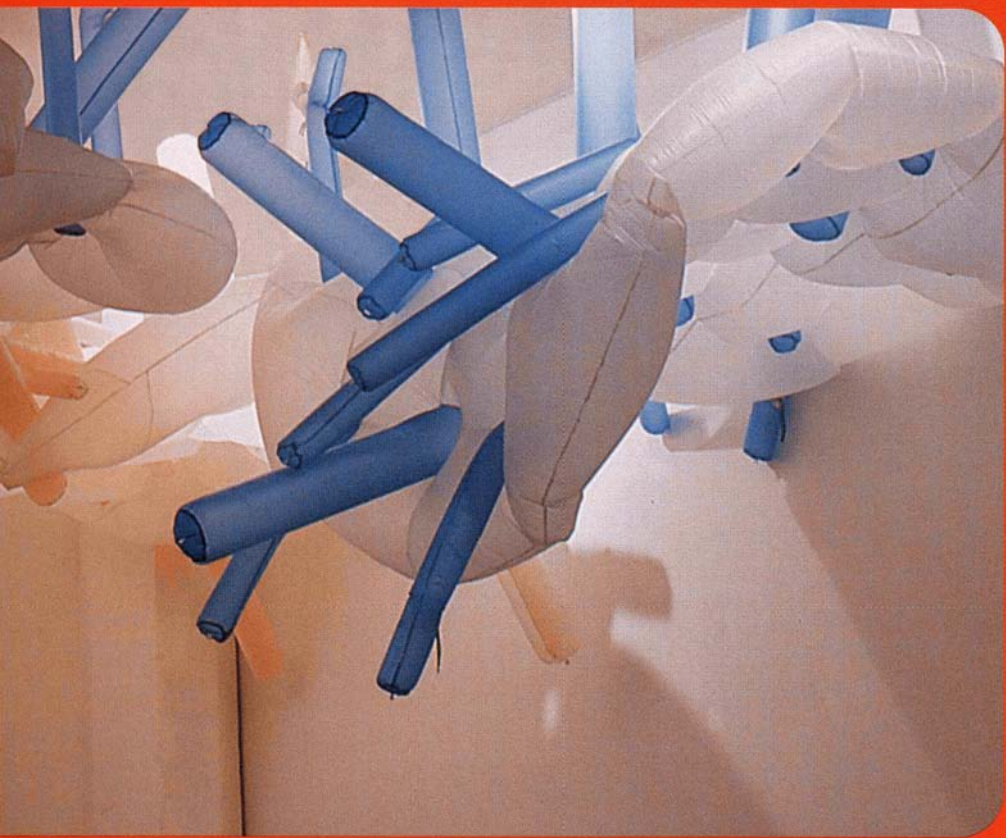
EMPHATIC PLAY

Inflatable artwork wears a deceptive simplicity. The form itself imparts an innocuous demeanor. To some, its airy quality suggests a lack of substance. Just so much fluff. It is an impression that belies the craftsmanship typically behind such work. The work of New York artist Lee Boroson typifies the malleable method, and malleable effect, of the inflatable genre. In the case of Boroson, every inflatable installation he has produced since 1995—including *Lake Effect*—has been site-specific. Measured, cut and hand-sewn to fit a selected site.

Boroson's project for Hallwalls utilizes the one portion of gallery space that is typically unused, isolating the space near the ceiling from the more functional space below. Not quite a drop ceiling, Boroson still provides for visual access to the space above the work by leaving the piece partially "unhinged." What the view above reveals is a complex network of inflatable tentacles that support the structure of the new, soft ceiling.

The partially-collapsed appearance of *Lake Effect* undercuts the rigor and specificity used in preparing the piece. It is measured and produced to fit the Hallwalls' ceiling space. Were every dangling tentacle attached, what we would see is a tight field of inflated circles, like an accumulation of bubbles on the surface of water. Yet, despite the specific measurements and preparations, Boroson ultimately chooses to allow the work to shrug, to sigh, to hang out, to find its own final form within the architectural space it inhabits. Deflated and inflated daily, this form is actually never final, but endures subtle and continuous shifts.







Inflatables are undeniably Pop (they have pop!), but they also belong to a broader array of ambiguously formal sculpture. It is difficult not to recognize the elegance in Boroson's frothing cluster of forms. *Lake Effect* has no immediately discernible point of reference. Allusions to clouds and bubbles abound, but neither is fully descriptive of the work. It would be as easy to describe it as an hallucinogenic exploded view of an overgrown mushroom patch. And while there is no explicit reference in evidence, there is undeniably a sexual (not just sexy) demeanor about the piece. It is all soft, bulbous forms protruding and bumping against each other.

Appropriately, the sensation below the work is an intimate one. Shortening the height of the gallery by as much as five feet in certain sections, *Lake Effect* hangs low enough to literally brush the viewer. The lights above are diffused by the work itself, softening and quieting the expanse of its underbelly.

It is a temporary bower in the gallery, a self-conscious and artificial environment within which a certain atmospheric effect is nonetheless real and discernible.

Altering the manner in which we perceive a physical space, the work introduces an effect to the viewer that is gently palpable, a transformative opportunity. In this way, Boroson's work functions in the same manner as many other large-scale sculpture and even much architecture. Through its size, it emphatically occupies the space. Through its colorful, inflated persona, it plays with the space. And through its size and its play, it transforms the space. Transforming the space, it affects how we perceive our position in space and redirects our sense of the surrounding environment.

Importantly, the details of this transformation remain ambiguous: elated, contemplative, hilarious.

John Massier, Visual Arts Curator



Lee Boroson

Education

1989 Masters of Fine Arts, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN **1989** Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME **1985** Bachelors of Fine Arts, State University of New York, New Paltz, NY

Exhibitions

Selected solo exhibitions

2002 "Lake Effect", Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY **2000** "Windowbox", Block Artspace, KCAI, Kansas City, MO
"Pleasure Grounds, Version 3", Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Omaha, NE
1999/2000 "Underpass", Whitney Museum of American Art, at Phillip Morris, New York, NY
"Pleasure Grounds", Genovese/Sullivan Gallery, Boston, MA
1997/1998 "Whitewater", Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Snug Harbor Cultural Arts Center, NY
1997 "Lee Boroson- New Sculpture", Derek Eller Gallery, New York, NY

Selected group exhibitions

2002 "Thin Skin", ICI Exhibitions, traveling, to begin at AXA Gallery, NY
"Humanoid", Frederieke Taylor Gallery, New York, NY **2001** "Brooklyn!", Palm Beach ICA, Palm Beach, FL
2000 "soft core", Joseph Helman Gallery, New York, NY **1999** "Another Place", Helman Gallery, New York, NY
"Escape", DNA Gallery, Provincetown, MA "Men Who Sew" YMCA Gallery, New York, NY
"Zero-G: When Gravity Becomes Form", Whitney Museum of American Art at Champion, Stam., CT
"Neuberger Biennial", Neuberger Museum, Purchase, NY "Lee Boroson / Heidi Schlatter", Momena Art, Brooklyn, NY
1998 "Here", Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT
"Polter-Zeitgeist", Cape Museum of Fine Art, Dennis, Cape Cod, MA
1997 "Emerging Sculptors #10", Sculpture Center, New York, NY **1996** "L'art du Plastique", curated by Robert Fleck, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, FR.

Selected Publications

2002 "Art Floats Through Midtown; BLOWUP", Village Voice, Feb. 19, Leslie Camhi
2000 "Windowbox" on the world", The Kansas City Star, December 10, Alice Thorson
"On Topic: Interiors, Balloons, and Marcel Duchamp", Review, December, Kati Toivanen
"Lee Boroson", review of Underpass at Whitney PM, Sculpture Magazine, Sept., Jonathan Goodman
"Underpass at Whitney Philip Morris", Artforum, summer, Frances Richard Illustration and review, Around Town, The New Yorker, February 21 & 28
1999 "Skintight", Art Guide, The New York Times, November 26, Ken Johnson
"Fred Tomaselli and Lee Boroson", Art Guide, The New York Times, December 24, Ken Johnson
"Lee Boroson's Fabricated Garden", artsMEDIA, December, Jill Waterman
"Sew what?: Men pick up the needle but avoid getting into knots about gender", Time Out New York, Dec. 2, Adam Wisniewski
"Men With Needles and Some Points to Make", The New York Times, Nov. 7, Andrea Delblanco
"Lee Boroson: Pleasure Grounds", Art New England, August Sept., Miles Unger
"Another Place", The New York Times, September 10, Ken Johnson "Another Place", The New Yorker, September 10
"Lily pads and other inflated pleasures", The Boston Globe, April 29, Cate McQuaid
"Pleasure Grounds' (with air)", South End News, April 29, Sarah Dry
"Lloyd's Last Laugh; Polterzeitgeist at the Cape Museum of Fine Arts", artsMEDIA, Winter Issue, Pamela Mandell
1998 "ART: A Dozen Artists at Work Within a Challenging Space", New York Times, November 29, 1998, William Zimmer
"Lee Boroson; New York; Star Track: The Next Generation", Artnews, May, Alexi Worth

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HALLWALLS CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

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