

Dorothee Golz von Carin Kuoni

Hollow World III is a seemingly self-sufficient uninhabitable habitat. In a sort of weird office stand-off, three chairlike objects seem to be courting the favor of what looks like a computer monitor above them, which appears to bow down to the remote control on one of the "chairs," all of them supported (and connected) by a curved metal armature. The whole scene is encased in a bubble of transparent, malleable plastic, gently coaxed to life by an air blower that sits on the floor and keeps it inflated. This freestanding "planet" threatens to roll through the exhibition space and beyond.

Hollow World III is only partially sealed: The remote control scans the ether, bringing information to the bubble's center. The viewer is seduced by the sensuality and familiarity of the soft "chairs," yet somewhat alienated by the clinical aesthetics of the arrangement, and kept outside by the impenetrable film of the bubble, in which one sees one's own reflection on its shiny surface. As Golz has commented, "The fisheye perspective of the bubble internalizes the scene and separates it from our outer experience.... In spite of all this transparency, a clear line of demarcation is drawn between 'here' and 'there.' It represents something else."



Golz's work involves the study of different realities and how we perceive them. She started in the early 1990s with common household objects such as telephones, appliances, and car seats, transforming them into objects of desire by wrapping them in soft, sensuous materials. Terms describing changes in context that affect our perception ("control," "spheres of influence," "transgression," "authority") appear in the titles of many of her works and are translated into images that suggest equivalents - for instance, two seemingly identical bodies in one drawing or scientists in front of unintelligible matter in another. Each time, though, these equations tall

flat, most obviously in a 1996 floor sculpture of a string of indistinct blobs that simulates a graph, elliptically titled *Successful and Less Successful Days*. The reality of experience cannot be liberated from the intrinsic subjectivity of their analysts and observers. By looking at something, perhaps even by thinking about something, we affect it, as physicist Werner Heisenberg postulated in the 1920s in his uncertainty principle.

The multiple realities of most works of art include art-historical iconography and its narratives. *Hollow World III* alludes to several of them, most prominently the chair as stand-in for a person, as it did in van Gogh's work. We also witness here a modern-day courtship of Paris and the Three Graces, albeit with a contemporary twist: the prize of the apple-the remote-is being given to one among equals, or clones. In response to suggestions that the relationship between the *Hollow Worlds* and the bubble as a design feature of the 1960s, Golz has pointed out that her work is not utopian but more about deception and self-deception - not unlike the essence of the Paris myth.

Golz has spoken of the internal perception of our experience parallel to what we see and to the things that surround us. An alternative version of reality unfolds like a film alongside the external one. Her series of six *Hollow Worlds* - dating from 1996 to 1999, in four different sizes and with slightly different "furnishings" - has thus been associated with endophysics, the branch of physics that emphasizes the distinctiveness of each person's perception of reality: In the end, we all live in our own separate bubbles, and Golz's *Hollow Worlds* make visible the interface that links or separates inner and outer reality.