

art



Going on *Maneuvers*

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Boredom is deep and mysterious. Out of its unfathomable fog drifted the sensitive chaos of a telephone-pad doodle, over which my boss scrawled an ugly scar: "We don't take time to make drawings." Similarly, in Italo Calvino's story "The Workshop Hen," the workplace is where, at all times, without question, people must do what they think is expected of them rather than whatever it is they

Orchestral Maneuvers continues through May 12 at Wood Street Galleries, Downtown. 471-5605.

really want to do. Yet the philosophy of a Canadian two-man artists' collective leans toward liberation, referring to de Certeau's suggestion that we all take a little of our employer's time and resources to make something unnecessary, to engage in a small, subversive creative act from within the confines of serious business.

Architect Thomas McIntosh and composer Emmanuel Madan refer to themselves as "(The User)," a term that reduces the individual in our society to an abstract, generic ideal. Their works rise up in a general revolt against the obedience instinct, adding a kind of romance to the urban landscape. *Symphony for dot matrix printers* converts the workplace into a space "in which 'functional' work is replaced with music." Following John Cage's belief in encouraging people to listen to the world, there is a blurring of the edges here between "music" and environmental sounds inherent in an office suite.

The installation was created with trailing-edge technology, to express (The User)'s opposition to rabid consumerism, the attitude that to be able to do something you have to keep spending large amounts of money to get state-of-the-art products. Arranged within Wood Street Galleries, obsolete office equipment — 12 drab desks, each with an old 286-processor computer, monitor and dot matrix printer — outfits their concert hall. This orchestra of machinery and microphones is conducted by a network



Symphony for dot matrix printers

server, reading from a composed score. Each printer plays a different part — notes and rhythms comprised of letters, numbers, punctuation marks and other characters. A beat builds, like a chorus line of hammering hearts, into a rapture of metals. The printers' videotaped live movements rise from their reanimated junkyard corpses to do their shtick on a

screen high above the office. It's depersonalization in action.

Marina Rosenfeld's pieces arouse nostalgic yearnings for a pre-electronic, pre-industrial state. A technician of ecstasy, she opens music out into immersive environments. To create her ambient soundscapes, she exploits the iconic significance and technical idiosyncrasies of vinyl and acetate. Overlapping layers of LP surface noise, turntable rumble and bits of unidentifiable music mix up an intricate balm of sonic bliss. Sampled sounds are jump-cut improvisations, creating an integral aesthetic, a hybrid language that is both referential and familiar. Her compositions are built from records played simultaneously to correspond with a series of videos and objects.

Here, *fragment opera 7 — lovescene* is a part of an ongoing work in flux. Impressionistic 3-D photographs that incorporate trails of nighttime illumination explore the sensuality of surfaces and depth, also communicating Rosenfeld's interest in multiple views and movement. Coupled with abstract sonic design, narrative videos of nature seem projections straight from a heart with light, sound paintings that, though evocative, depict scenes that remain private. A home movie of a little dog plays delicately inside a white baby grand piano. A close shot of spring grass shaking in the wind takes her far away to look for the soul she had when she was a child. A sky overflows with snow, its silence capturing and amplifying Rosenfeld's music that goes on for a long time and, like love, seems to ebb rather than end. 