

beauty... it rubs against
it hangs there hurting one
insisting on its own
finally it gets so one cannot
then one must have bea



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X AMIR ZAKI: Eleven Minus One

Zaki's project, *Eleven Minus One*, meticulously recreated, in virtual three-dimensional space, a group of photographs made in the mid-1980's by internationally renowned Swiss artists Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Fischli and Weiss's photographs depict precariously balanced temporary sculptures that they intentionally constructed in a slap-dash manner. Through their depiction of these temporary objects made out of household detritus, Fischli and Weiss were able to interrogate sculptural traditions framed by concerns of heroic representation and masterful techniques.

Fischli and Weiss' work privileged the document over the sculpture, which Zaki interprets as an ironic inverse of ubiquitous professional photographic documentation. In the case of the latter, the photograph is simply seen as a necessary medium through which to disseminate the "best" view of the sculpture to viewers who could not see the sculptures in person. The photographer's job is usually to glorify the sculpture and render his/her point of view invisible and/or objective. The Fischli and Weiss photographs are intentionally somewhat crass and pathetic, anything but objective or exalted. Oddly enough, this "bad" quality is precisely what makes one notice the photographs in their own right.

In Zaki's adaptation of their work in the context of the exhibition, there was a re-inversion at play, privileging the sculpture, but as a 3D virtual non-object. Zaki presented a series of short photorealistic animation loops, a body of photographic prints depicting orthographic views of the 3D models, and a foldout book that is based on the eleven different ways that a cube can be unfolded. Working with this methodology allowed Zaki to question the conventions and limitations of photography by exploring depictions of "real" space, but without the restraints of actual physics or forces such as gravity. He was interested in the perversion of using the Fischli and Weiss photographs of quickly made, throw-away sculptures as a source to create an incredibly laborious photorealistic virtual 3D scene that can be explored from all angles, both through photographic and orthographic projections. Zaki fetishized the sculptures by making them virtual, stylized and idealized. In the animations the sculptures simply spin, teeter, or gyrate indefinitely. In the photographs, they hover in a perfect orthographic projection space, surrounded by a black void.