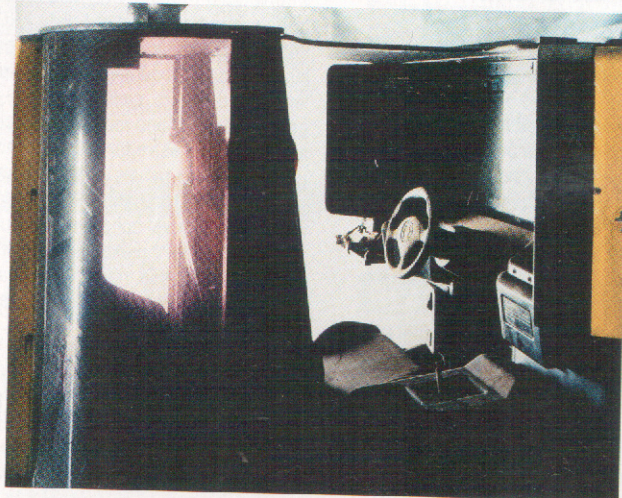


Partial view of Michał Budny's exhibition "Żywica," 2012; at Raster.

Ricarda Roggan: *Reset 7*, 2011, C-print, 47½ by 59 inches; at Eigen+Art.



Roggan, who is deeply interested in things that people once used but have since abandoned, has a tremendous eye not just for details, but also for how three-dimensional shapes, textures and surfaces behave when photographed. *Reset 1*, a side view, shows matching seats with curving backs and two steering wheels that face dual monitors in a faded and sullied red chassis. The blank screens appear as dark, inky voids, while the plastic scrim in the background is all glaring, white intensity. *Reset 2*, claustrophobically filling most of the frame, was taken from behind the same seats; it emphasizes just how black and implacable these screens are.

The images suggest utopian dreams that have ended badly, and they are also oddly touching. Here are seats that once held thousands of bodies, monitors that once riveted thousands of minds; but now the games are merely abased, divorced from the human. With *Reset 7*, it's tough to distinguish just what you are looking at. White light slants onto the steering wheel and part of the dusty seat. The back of the machine becomes an almost abstract suite of black, soft crimson and bright white shapes. This photograph is terrifying in its loneliness and desolation.

For "Set" (2011), a series of three images, Roggan shifted her attention to the area that she made from plastic tarps. With the arcade games removed, this apparatus assumes a new life as a rickety, yet also luminous and ethereal, structure (a room within a room or a transformational chamber). These photos offer cloudy glimpses of the surrounding space while the supple, illuminated plas-

tic surfaces become quietly bedazzling, partly abstract images in their own right.

—Gregory Volk

WARSAW MICHAŁ BUDNY RASTER

Warsaw-based Michał Budny is known for austere sculptures made from commonplace materials like cardboard, colored foil, paper, plastic and paint. With a subdued palette tending toward gray, black, brown and white, these sculptures can be very unassuming, yet also supremely evocative.

Budny's excellent exhibition at the newly relocated Raster Gallery was surprising, because at first glance the gallery seemed conspicuously empty, save for several plastic sheets hanging from the walls, and an off-color section of one wall that looked as if it were being restored. Immediate bafflement ensued: Had the dates changed? Was this the aftermath of an exhibition that had recently closed, or perhaps preparations for an exhibition yet to be installed? Such confusion shaded into enticement when you realized that Budny had subtly, yet comprehensively, transformed the whole space, using his signature, bare-bones materials and rudimentary geometric forms to decisively alter the architecture.

The exhibition commenced in the front of the gallery, where a bank of windows looks onto the street. Budny left most windows alone but covered two with colored plastic film, which changed the incoming light to a bluish mauve. To the right, a large, slightly off-white, rectangular section of one wall seemed to be painted

but was in fact covered with transparent adhesive tape, like a tactile "skin" clinging to the surface. It was one of many variations on reductive painterly abstraction. A recessed doorwaylike area was sealed at its back with a gypsum and cardboard barrier and fitted with soft, plastic foil walls, creating a nebulous and vaporous, even ethereal, space.

Elsewhere, two hanging plastic sheets suggested a work site, or a debased version of elegant drapery. Behind one, the wall was covered with another "skin" made from paper, through which you could partially see grayish painted drips and streaks and, at the bottom, congealed green paint on the floor: a burst of ragged, colorful intensity. Nearby, Budny had carefully prepared and painted a rectangle of an already white wall his own white. Gouge marks delineated its borders and revealed layers of old paint—the room's own material past.

As your eyes adjusted to the quiet variations in color and texture, and as you realized that all of the seemingly casual things present were there for thoughtful and specific reasons, the whole space—a distressed "white cube" revealing multiple traces of its own use and history through the decades, down to the worn tile floor—seemed alive; not a neutral container for displaying artworks, but an active and vital force that heightened one's experience. Moreover, this exhibition changed (at times dramatically) in response to shifting natural light. Past and present, entropy and renovation, normalcy and potent transformation all fused in Budny's exhibition, titled "Żywica" (Resin), a Polish word related to "życie," meaning "life."

—Gregory Volk