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Margaret Hinders

Rona Pondick  
*fiction/nonfiction*  
155 Ave B 4/21-5/22

Following an initial feeling of squeamishness, these sculptures evoke a dim memory of early childhood, when the fecal shapes which are Pondick's basic sculptural module were not dreaded but were a source of pride and absorbing interest.

This is not to suggest that the only value of this work is the challenge to return to our "natural" childish state. It explores the intimate ties between the digestive process, including elimination, and our awareness of mortality, one reason references to bodily functions are taboo.

A significant effect of the work is the attraction/repulsion reaction it produces. "Lead Bed" is made up of a wooden slab covered with lead sheets, the top sheet cynically, invitingly, turned back. The bed has a fluffy, plump satin pillow with a bronze fecal form plopped on it. I sensed the comfort potential of the pillow, the discomfort potential of the lead, and was alarmed at the presence of what looked just like a piece of shit on the pillow. This bed is no place to rest. In "Angel," Pondick used wax, plastic and nylon to create a seething, maggotlike pile atop a stack of dirty white pillows.

Pondick's sculpture confronts the viewer with the darker side of the life cycle. No wonder it is difficult to approach. "Life is a process," this work says. "It is much bigger than you are. You will be digested, transformed, reborn." —M.H.

