

**"Nothing Stops A New Yorker"**



**Malachi Farrell, "Nothing Stops A New Yorker"**

**Thrust Projects, through Dec 20 (see Elsewhere).**

**K**inetic sculpture appears to be in vogue this season, as seen in powerful shows by Jon Kessler at P.S. 1, Rebecca Horn at Sean Kelly and Malachi Farrell at the newly opened Thrust Projects on the Bowery. On the heels of an impressive showing earlier this year in the Centre Pompidou's "Dionysiac" blockbuster, Farrell (who has relocated from Paris to NYC) installs cardboard replicas of Manhattan skyscrapers in the gallery's modest space. Set on pedestals, this cityscape looms above dense piles of refuse heaped on the floor.

Each building is outfitted with protruding cardboard arms, activated by a motion detector (run by software code designed by the artist), which also triggers a two-part, high-decibel soundtrack. The first audio is an aerobics session, with the cheery voice of the instructor orchestrating the flow of the movement as the sculptures raise and lower their arms. The workout is interrupted by panicked news reports from September 11, 2001, along with terror-alert broadcasts and excerpts from Public Enemy songs.

The show's punk aesthetic is a rich mix of menace and absurdity, borrowing from *art povera*, Dada, Jean Tinguely and sound art. New Yorkers whose lives are bound to recall the rupture in their routine on that fateful day and to revisit the philosophical questions that arose in its wake; Farrell's heaps of trash suggest the decline of our infrastructure, even as buildings continue to loom above it. Slowly but surely, artists have emerged from the fog of 9/11 and used the resulting paradigm shift to set new art in motion.—*Max Henry*