



The University of Illinois at Chicago

Gallery 400 (M/C 033)
College of Architecture, Art, and Urban Planning
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& how too

Artist Mike Hill and architect Scott Kester, as the Art Builders Collaborative (ABC), continue to explore the relationship between the production of artwork and the creation of the physical space in which art is exhibited.

The Gallery 400 installation, "& how too" is a critical analysis of an art gallery as a neutral white room. ABC has built a 3/4 scale version of The Robbin Lockett Gallery using standard building materials and methods, thus essentially re-creating in an exhibition context, this commercial exhibition space. Displayed as art object, the gallery's particular idiom of design and construction is revealed. Murals illustrating the step-by-step process of building the gallery were painted on Gallery 400's walls, then documented by a professional art photographer before being painted over. ABC's exhibition includes the photo-documents of the instructions, while the murals themselves have been white washed; added to the layers of art shows past. Simultaneously, the exhibition space is demystified through the exposure of its physical creation, and revealed as an important record of exhibition history -- of the physical absence of artworks. As shows come and go, the walls remain superficially the same. Spackled, repainted, ready for the next.

The deconstruction of the exhibition space in "& how too" facilitates recognition of previous space and events. In past installations at other galleries exhibition history was virtually excavated. Hill and Kester sanded parts of walls, uncovering wall drawings by Sol Lewitt; dozens of layered artist's names announcing shows; and constellations of monthly nail holes. In this installation, they further investigate the relation between physical and historical construction, and their combined effect on the formation of memory.