

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2008

hecomi

Intriguing looking/sounding work by a young Japanese sculptor reviewed in the December *Artforum* (sorry, no link as of now):

Delicately branching cracks and furrows that resemble river deltas are the forms that capture [Ken'ichiro] Taniguchi's interest. He uses transparent film to transfer their outlines to yellow plastic – or, sometimes, to other materials like stainless steel – creating an exact negative. He then transforms these raw materials into foldable sculptures by slicing through the casts, often at the thinnest possible points, and mounting hinges at each fold. And so every crack, every crevice, is transformed into a literally manifold sculpture that can be given many different configurations. Each sculpture is named for the location of the cracks that produced it, including addresses in Russia, the Netherlands, and Thailand.

The review (originally written in German by a Wolf Jahn and translated by an Oliver E. Dryfuss) covers a recent show [at the Mikiko Sato Gallery](#) in Hamburg. It contextualizes the work in terms of cartography as art, Leonardo's "[chance landscapes](#)," and traditional Japanese aesthetics. Most notable is Taniguchi's use of the concept-aesthetic *hecomi*: "crack, indentation, or, figuratively, exhaustion."

Local reader-viewers should be reminded of the Johnson museum's [recent](#) show of mended Japanese ceramics, in which cracks were beautifully repaired with gold or lacquer (this traditional practice is also mentioned in the review). These highlighted fissures often set apart ceramic fragments of differing style and origin juxtaposed in a collage-like manner. For example, bits of more polished and/or ornate material would be grafted on to these characteristically rough, earthy vessels.

I am interested in the way Taniguchi seems intent upon preserving the natural complexity of his source material while imposing upon it a new, and specifically sculptural, kind of architecture. (Needless to say, I have not seen the work in person and it might not live up to these expectations.)

POSTED BY ARTHUR AT [4:28 PM](#)