

# PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

Furniture making in no-man's land

BY CAMERON SKENE

In *La Chute*, the photographic image tumbles off the eight-foot-high strip of paper onto the floor. A cabinet waits at the bottom of the picture, meticulous in dimension. The photographed wood grain of the cabinet reproduces the original object. Photographic developer is splashed on: "painted" onto the paper and the object. Roberto Pellegrinuzzi's "splash" of image recites a tale of the dirty work done in the darkroom, the apparatus of the transformation of image that is the gist of his work.

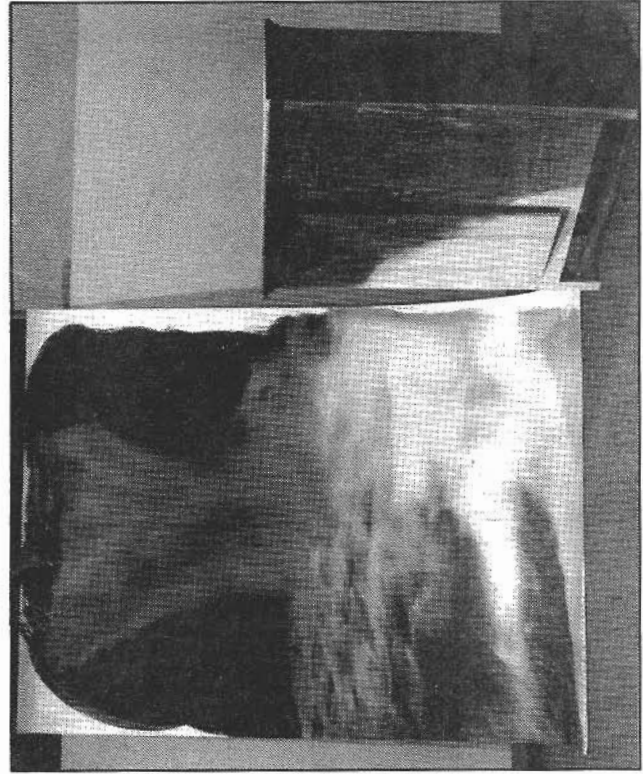
As part of *Le Mois de Photo 89*, Pellegrinuzzi's show is a hodgepodge of photographic possibility. Photography as an art form seems to dwell in a visual no-man's land. Since its conception, the camera remained a straight image recorder, a documentary of subject whose mechanical means usually buggers statement on the subject itself. Photography relentlessly comments on photography, like a skipping

record. As Brecht once said, "a photograph of a Krupp Factory doesn't say anything about a Krupp factory."

Pellegrinuzzi extends those mechanical means by turning reality inside-out like a dirty shirt—with all the seams, tags and oddities of knit present for the eyes of any ardent fruit-of-the-loomer.

With a demonic meticulousness, Pellegrinuzzi literally "furnishes" the gallery space with his camera's rendition of reality. The furniture-objects are recreated from the camera's point of view. This documentary of object, at once banal and mysterious, creates a world where the camera is the measure of all things.

In *The Passage*, which consists of a chair, desk, and small table, a manned canoe drifts across the surface. The image's transient passage is enhanced and contrasted by the solid three-dimensionality of the object. This tension, or constant play of paradox is one of the staples of



*La Chute*: a wide-angle, long shot look at the art of photography

the artist's work.

The most visually striking piece in the show, *La Chute*, reveals another process of photography: the developer and stop-bath was applied to the large piece with strong brushwork, leaving dripping, undeveloped spots. The painterliness of the process adds the touch of magic inherent in the developing process. For the most part, the camera itself is the star of the show. The straightforward reproduction of the object allows the artist to build his pre-recorded world, little paradoxes for the viewer to ponder.

The paradoxical setting of the elements has it's moments, espe-

anything to say about a Krupp factory, but he does have something to say about photography.

Roberto Pellegrinuzzi at Galerie Optica to October 8

## IS IT LIVE OR IS IT EXPOTEC?

BY ETIENNE GILFILLAN

Equating science with tedious lectures or laborious equations is an all-too-familiar notion, but this is your last chance to see a show that challenges this assumption. Expotec 89, which closes at the end of the month, is an exhibit in which the observer is anything but passive. Whereas Images du Futur presented us with a series of technologically tame displays, Expotec introduces us to a host of dazzling, state-of-the-art, interactive wonders.

If kids can touch it, do crazy things with it, and end up learning something, an interactive science display can be a never-ending source of enjoyment. This was demonstrated by one of the busiest exhib-

its, a computer screen which photographs you and lets you modify the results with colours and silly accessories. *CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE*

cially when applied with the looseness and verve of *La Chute*. The tension between object/recorded object in Pellegrinuzzi's constructions is more cerebral than visceral. It fails at times to ignite the optical synapses, and draw the viewer closer to the piece. *Le Naffrage* is a dull bit of news, with attempted rhythms that don't jive in an all-too-measured, all-too-"pictured" way.

Despite the occasional relapse, Pellegrinuzzi's meticulous installations inject some fresh life into the photographic process, and takes the camera beyond the dull clarity of the mechanically reproduced image. Pellegrinuzzi may not have