

CURATOR'S STATEMENT

**Embodied**

February 27 – April 4, 2009

Jake Beckman's most recent sculptures radically transform overlooked materials of our immediate world. They recall the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Art Nouveau undulating interiors of architects as Hector Guimard or Antonio Gaudi and the softened and collapsing painted shapes by early 20<sup>th</sup> century Surrealists as Salvador Dali or Yves Tanguy. These early modernists sought to transform art, design, and architecture with entirely new forms, largely flower and plant based, and to reveal the spontaneous creativity of the unconscious. In Beckman's sculpture, the artist uses a plasticity of the fantastic to put before us the critical interconnectedness between society and the most mundane aspects of its built environment.

All Beckman's artwork alters, and thereby highlights, a commonplace manmade element central to modern life. In the instance of **Embodied** the element is dry wall on studs, that ubiquitous and forgotten background of our lives. The transformation of the rigid, flat walls into seemingly living organisms that bulge, sag, pleat, and roil draws the viewer into a consideration of the hidden engineering systems that sustain our contemporary existence. Ultimately, these pieces, so droll and unexpected, may lead us to consider our responsibilities for the long term effects of the built environment upon the natural world.

Ann Albano  
Executive Director  
The Sculpture Center