

RISLEY/NYZIO

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## JACK RISLEY, DAVID NYZIO

### POSTMASTERS

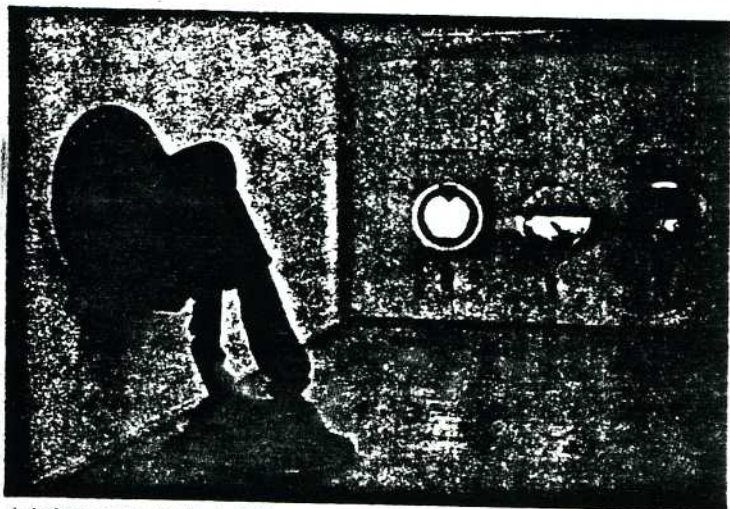
This show opened the year with a seductive, ominous vision of biotechnology and the future. Jack Risley and David Nyzio create very different objects, but both construct visual artifacts in which biology's destiny is technology. Risley's soft sculptures, made of leather, aluminum, rubber, and fiberglass, are like new limbs waiting for bodies that have not yet been created. They protrude from the wall, as if reaching out to touch the viewer. Some rubber and leather parts slide around the hard armatures like prophylactics. But these sculptures are more than fetishes, they are prostheses: fragments of things reproducing new forms of wholeness. Their resemblance to oversized futurist vacuum cleaners prompts thoughts of sewage, waste, and disposal.

The works by David Nyzio are even harder to pin down. The artist seems to be trying out a great number of ideas, with varying degrees of success. *Machine for Thinking*, 1985, consists of an orb covered with rust-colored iron powder, under which are installed a number of moving electromagnets. Forms seem to be growing and moving on the orb like tremulous sea creatures. The underwater plant-life effect is created by the slow movement of the iron powder, which coagulates and separates in biomorphic patterns. *Aspect of Slice I*, *Diet Slice*, and *Aspect of Slice II*, all 1988, consist of circular Plexiglas objects filled with water, which are hooked up to a light and filled with growing algae. The pieces are hung from the ceiling like exotic pendants: they seem to stand for the re-emergence of nature as a museum piece.

Nyzio's machines reproduce a patch of life, making the art object a kind of life-support system. The only nonkinetic piece here, *Paranoia Designed to Accommodate Control and Security*, 1988, consists of a female mannequin, naked to the waist, sticking out of the wall and wearing binoculars focused on a prism. The work is less successful than the others, perhaps because of its too literal nature. In general, this show is extraordinarily lyrical and quite moving. As survival becomes more and more unimaginable and unmanageable, we need to learn how to imagine a future so that there might actually be one. Nyzio and Risley manage to show us one face of what we might become.

— Catherine Liu

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Left: Jack Risley, *Untitled*, 1989, aluminum, leather, rubber. Right: (left to right) David Nyzio, *Aspect of Slice I*, *Diet Slice*, *Aspect of Slice II*, all 1988, mixed media. Installation view.