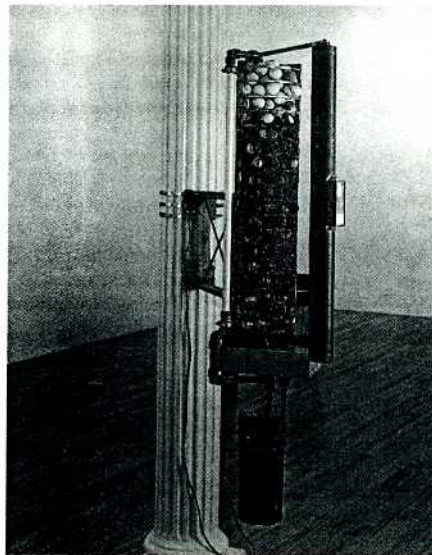


DAVID NYZIO POSTMASTERS

Now that we've been subjected to more than a few dishonest, however fashionable, hommages to planet earth from Julian Schnabel, Ashley Bickerton and other artists eager to cash in on the landed gentry's anxieties for their horse farms and beach fronts, a real naturalist finally emerges. For this, his first solo show, David Nyzio has created eight sculptures that allude to biology, technology, beauty and a bit of sadism. Few other artists have so absolutely approached nature as a medium that can be constructed and reformed. Although Smithsonian's earth works come to mind, Nyzio doesn't seem concerned with a grand conceptual gesture; his pieces have an intensely investigative, scientific and, well, wierd quality. For *Morphology*, 1988, Nyzio bred, then killed hundreds of milkweed bugs before pinning them into a mound, which he then placed on a piece of velour in a Plexiglas box. For *Hermaphrodite*, 1989, he cultivated a marijuana plant, then dipped it in resin, forcing it to resemble a dead bonsai tree. Nyzio's process suggests just how responsible for the planet people are: we can make it and we can destroy it. Two sculptures, freestanding treetrunk-like objects layered with iron pieces that cover hidden magnets, change shape when moved, resembling an accelerated fungus growth pattern and suggesting technology's potential to overpower nature.

Perhaps *Form*, 1989 (also the title of the exhibition) was the most striking piece in the show. A large grid "painting" of butterfly wings (which the artist bought, then cut into small squares), *Form* alludes to the conceptual framework within which Nyzio understands these nature-based explorations. For this artist, formalism, like the cyclical processes of the natural world, is a series of synchronistic steps, where end-points can function as new beginnings.
Laura Cottingham



DAVID NYZIO, PERFECT PROGRESSION OF RANDOM SPACING, 1988.
STEEL, WATER, ALGAE, GOLFBALLS, FILTER, FLOURESCENT LIGHT, 60" X 24" X 50".