

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 2007

POSTMASTERS

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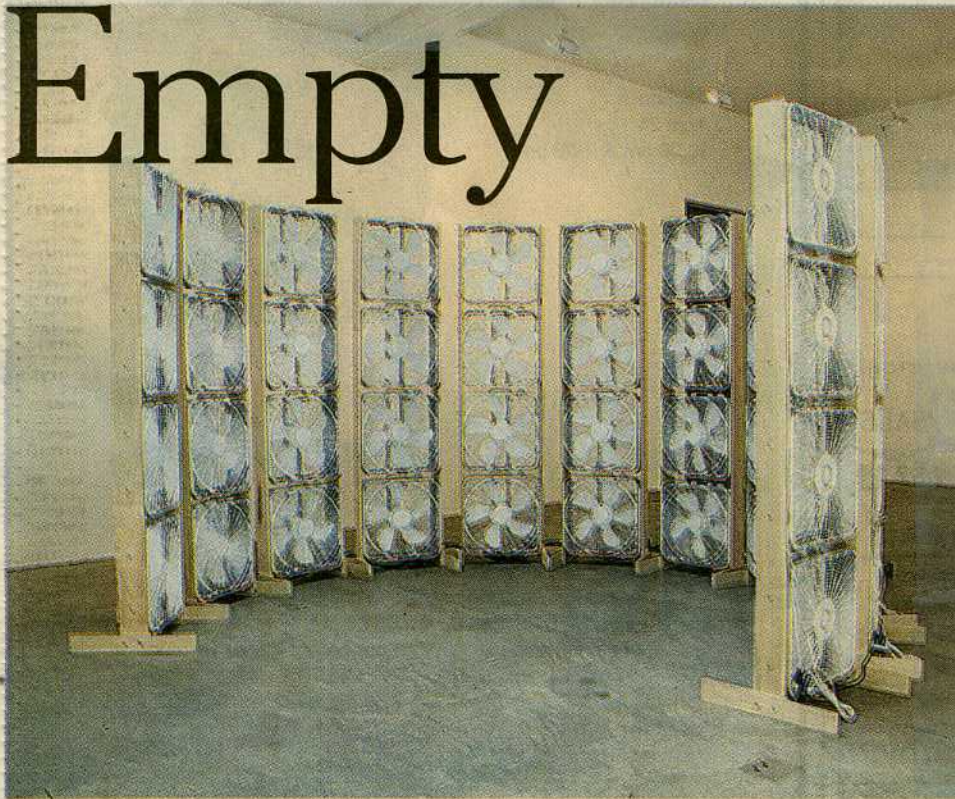
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WEEKEND Arts FINE ARTS LEISURE

The New York Times

Space Redefined in Chelsea

Empty



Postmasters Gallery

Spencer Finch's fans at Postmasters replicate wind measured one day at Walden Pond.

Empty

Chelsea usually offers something in the way of the empty- or nearly empty gallery tradition. Sometimes it is an attempt to link the gallery space with the outside world by doing almost nothing. For example, the first gallery of Spencer Finch's show at Postmasters contains only a semicircular wall of electric fans turning on and off at random. Actually, they are programmed to replicate the shifting speeds and directions of the wind as measured by Mr. Finch one day last month at Walden Pond, far from the wilds of Chelsea.

In other instances, the emptiness turns inward to emphasize mental space, as is the case with Jonathan Monk's show at the Casey Kaplan Gallery. Although the show contains some paintings and sculptures, the best works are the slightest ones, as when Mr. Monk pays tribute to Frank Sinatra and Bruce Nauman with one image, pointedly tacked to the wall; adds mystical circles (CD tracings) to the covers of used books; and creates a smoke-filled, laser-beam nod to Magritte.

The most effective work is a tiny projection of "The Cheat," an early silent film, with sound accompaniment provided by a boom box tuned to a classical music station. Both times I visited, operas were playing, which turned out to be perfect.