



OFFICE POLITICS

Raul Ortega Ayala
(Photograph by
Roberto Rubalcava,
courtesy Rokeby)

ART

RAUL ORTEGA AYALA

UNTIL MAY 9
Rokeby

Like most artists, Mexican-born Raul Ortega Ayala has to undertake some form of paid employment to finance his practice but, unlike most artists, the jobs he chooses also form part of the inspiration and research for the artworks he makes.

Titled Bureaucratic Sonata, this series of mainly sculpture-based works relate to a period of time spent toiling away in offices. In many cases, Ortega Ayala is reconfiguring the objects around him in a way that hints at boredom or escape. Metal-cased neon ceiling lights are joined together to create the form of a life-size, glowing, rowing boat. In a circular exercise, the shredded strips of a brown envelope and a letter typed on white paper are woven together to create a new,

rather beautiful brown and white envelope. Five brightly coloured Post-it notes are stuck on the wall in a line so that the shadows created beneath them merge to form a rainbow effect.

Other works take a more historical look at office life. The story of Bette Nesmith Graham, who created Liquid Paper, the first correction fluid (and whose son, Mike Nesmith, later became one of the Monkees), is presented on a sheet of paper typed using a manual typewriter, with corrections made using the product it describes. A diagram of different office seating layouts marks their potential for bureaucracy, interaction, subdivision and differentiation. A video shows the artist wrestling with a plastic office chair as he struggles and finally succeeds in folding it almost flat.

Having confined himself in an office for this series of work, Ortega Ayala has got out in the fresh air for his next project and is currently working as a gardener. Rokeby, 37 Store Street, London WC1 (020-7168 9942).

HELEN SUMPTER

also showing...

INNER WORLDS OUTSIDE

APRIL 28-JUNE 25

Whitechapel Art Gallery,
80-82 Whitechapel High Street,
London E1 (020-7522 7888)

Outsider artists such as Henry Darger, Madge Gill and Adolf Wolfli show alongside major twentieth-century names whose work relates to them, among them Dubuffet, Kandinsky and Klee

ROGER HIORNS

UNTIL MAY 28

Milton Keynes Gallery, 900
Midsummer Boulevard, Central
Milton Keynes MK9 (01908 676900)

Sculptural work from the past five years including car engines covered in bright blue copper sulphate crystals, and suspended ceramic vessels that slowly ooze columns of white foam

THE BIG ISSUE

WORKING NOT BEGGING

APRIL 24 - 30 2006 NO. 690