

Mark Currah

'Asylum'

Time Out.

June 9-16 1999

Spray-painted onto the floor are the words 'Help Your Self'. At the opening, the slogan was interpreted as 'help yourself' and the automatic air-pistols that accompanied it quickly disappeared, leaving only orange pellets - spent ammunition - rolling round the floor. Given that the title was 'Fuck The Fucking Lot Of You', the response was hardly surprising. Also walking out the door without the artist's consent were Matthew Jones' newspaper facsimilies. Stacked on a pallet, his '1,000 Copies Of The New York Daily News On The Day That Became The Stonewall Riot, Reproduced By Hand From Microfiche' functions as a kind of historical monument. They also demonstrate a clever chain of reproductive processes; its a shame, then, that he didn't pay more attention to the issue of distribution. A notice now encourages viewers to read the paper, but not to take one away.

Bank's knowing work throws into sharp relief this kind of naivete. An amusing text suggests conflicting meanings that could be attributed to their version of a Duane Hanson figure, which is kneeling and polishing the gallery floor. With a goldfish bowl for a head it looks like crap, but the whole ensemble is a smart and acidic poke at sentimental realism. Kit Wise has entirely covered an old mattress with a carapace made of hundreds of drawing-pins. It looks gorgeous, but what was he thinking about as he laboriously stuck them in? I can't imagine anyone stealing bits of his work.