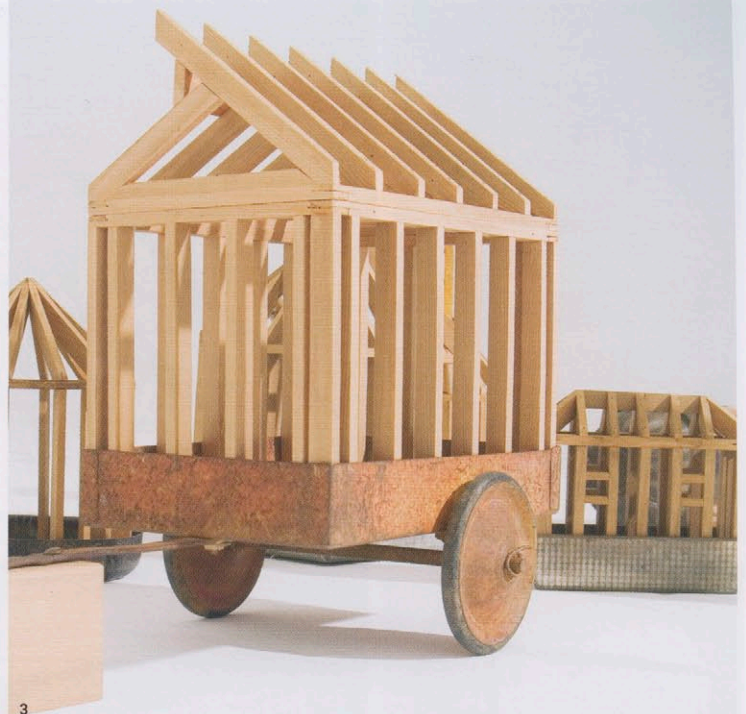




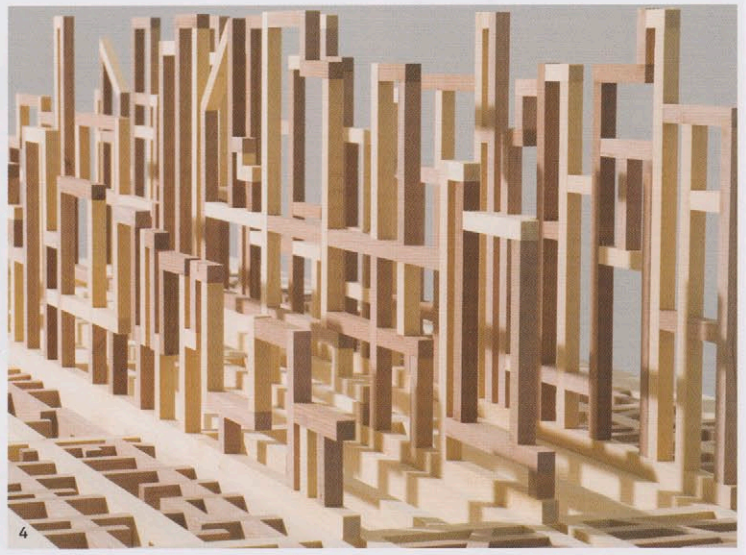
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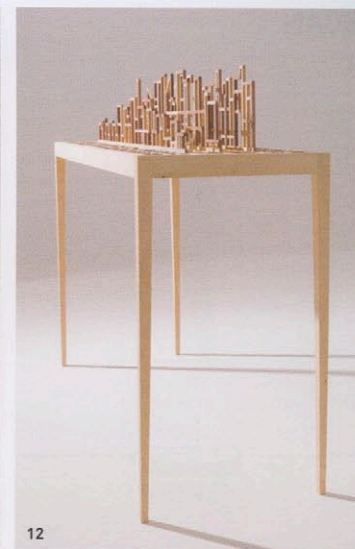
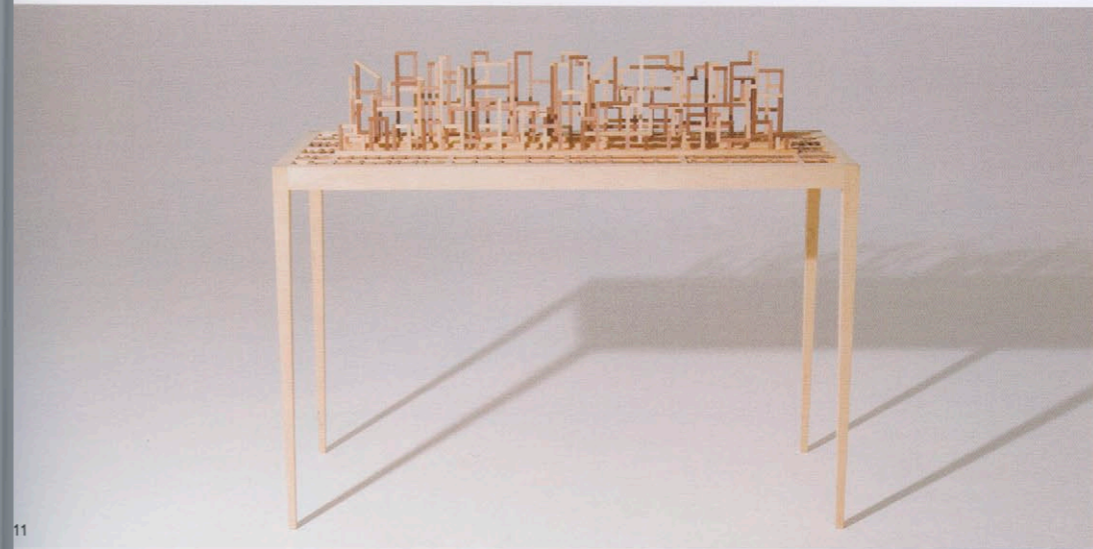
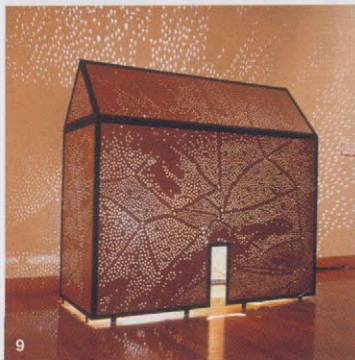
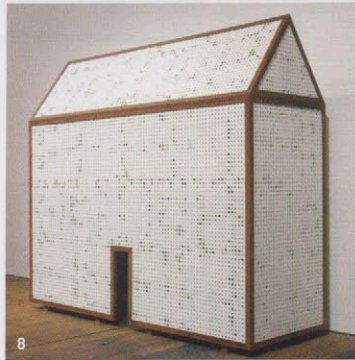
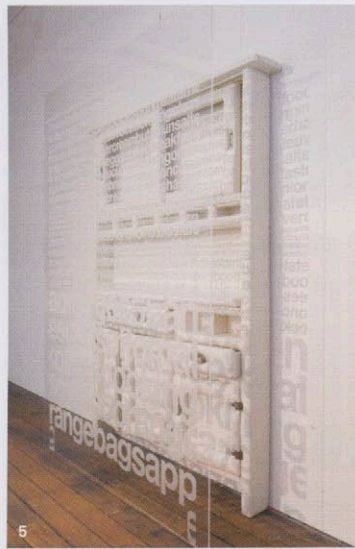


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AGAINST THE GRAIN

× **Against the Grain:**
Works in Wood 2000–2007
 Craft Victoria
 31 Flinders Lane
 Melbourne Victoria 3000
 18 May – 23 June 2007
 ☎ 03 9650 7775
 🌐 www.craftvic.asn.au

1 EVIDENCE, 2003.
 2 LATELY MY DIET HAS BECOME A TRIFLE MONOTONOUS, 2001.
 3 EVIDENCE, 2003 (DETAIL).
 4 VARIATIONS ON MONOTONY, 2007 (DETAIL).
 ALL WORKS BY GREER HONEYWILL.



5 / UNTITLED, 2003-2007.

6 / UNTITLED, 2003-2007 (DETAIL).

7 / LATELY MY DIET HAS BECOME A TRIFLE MONOTONOUS, 2001 (DETAIL).

8 / ELYSIUM, 2007.

9 / EMBROIDERED HOUSE, 2005. ACCOMPANYING SOUNDSCAPE: FRANK MOYLAN, MUSIC TO EMBROIDER A HOUSE, 2007.

10 / CROSSING, 2007.

11 + 12 / VARIATIONS ON MONOTONY, 2007.

13 / A RANGE OF WORKS INCLUDING CARPET, 2005 (BOTTOM RIGHT).

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN BEST

At a time when the cult of celebrity chefs and designers pushes into our interior worlds, this retrospective of Greer Honeywill's work from the past eight years was a timely reminder of a seismic shift in the values placed on activities and gender roles associated with the home that has taken place in the last fifty years. Cooking and maintaining the interior are no longer duties that are hidden or regarded as solely feminine.

The works express a range of everyday domestic forms: furniture, a carpet, domestic tableaux, and the house itself. Their arrangement

drew the viewer into a series of intimate encounters with the spaces and labour of domestic life, where one could see a builder's apprentice's model elevated on an altar-like table, as in *Crossing* (2007). In two dimensions, the references to gable-end elevations that recur in the spectacular piece *Carpet* (2005) suggested an endless pavement of tessellated tiles obliterating green spaces. Positioned as it was at the centre of the *Craft Victoria gallery*, and seen in the afterglow of aspirations of home ownership, *Carpet* was especially poignant for its ability to transform the familiar hall carpet

runner (surrounded by tables) into a dramatic exterior landscape. *Carpet* is composed of the native timbers we value in furniture yet struggle to protect, as trees, from being cleared away for housing. Honeywill collaborated with local craftsmen to produce these sculptures, and the woodworking skills embodied in them shows that the techniques and materials of home-making cannot easily be divorced from some of its unpalatable consequences.

A recurring theme here is the sometimes fine distinction between time wasted and time valued. What is most powerful about this work is

its capacity to realize and maintain the tension between the good and comforting aspects of building and cooking – Honeywill refers to “sustenance and shelter” – and the drudgery and loss of identity that comes of replicating housing and recipes continuously. This tension is especially evident in the three-dimensional house forms on show in the exhibition. *Lately My Diet Has Become a Trifle Monotonous* (2001) makes use of seemingly open, exposed frames, showing the potential of the unfinished house. This long terrace is surrounded by rows of cookie cutters spelling recipes, used by Honeywill's

mother, from the Country Women's Association. These garden-like beds of words act like a sharp threshold to the inner world of repetitive domestic chores. In contrast, doll's house forms underpin the more recent *Elysium* (2007) and *Embroidered House* (2005-2007), which are clad in marine ply and pierced by patterns inspired by the tracks of tirelessly labouring ghost crabs. Across these works, the reassuring familiarity of the house is disturbed by the realization that the tiny doorway renders the interior barely penetrable.

Honeywill is based in Woodend, around an hour's drive from Melbourne, and at this remove from the city she has reflected on her growing awareness of our contemporary addiction to consumption. “I want people to think about the way they live,” she says. “We live unsustainably.” The slice of an inter-war kitchen cabinet that is the focus of *Untitled* (2003-2007) is partially covered in padded calico, evoking the uneasy ties of women to the kitchen. The individual cupboard and drawer spaces, which appear empty beneath the perspex, are printed with written items from shopping lists made

by Honeywill over the past thirty years. This work speaks insistently of the insatiable physical and emotional appetites of the family.

Honeywill's sculptures urge us to acknowledge the complex relationships between comfort and effort in our domestic endeavours, in order to create sustainable interior and exterior lives. TRACEY AVERY