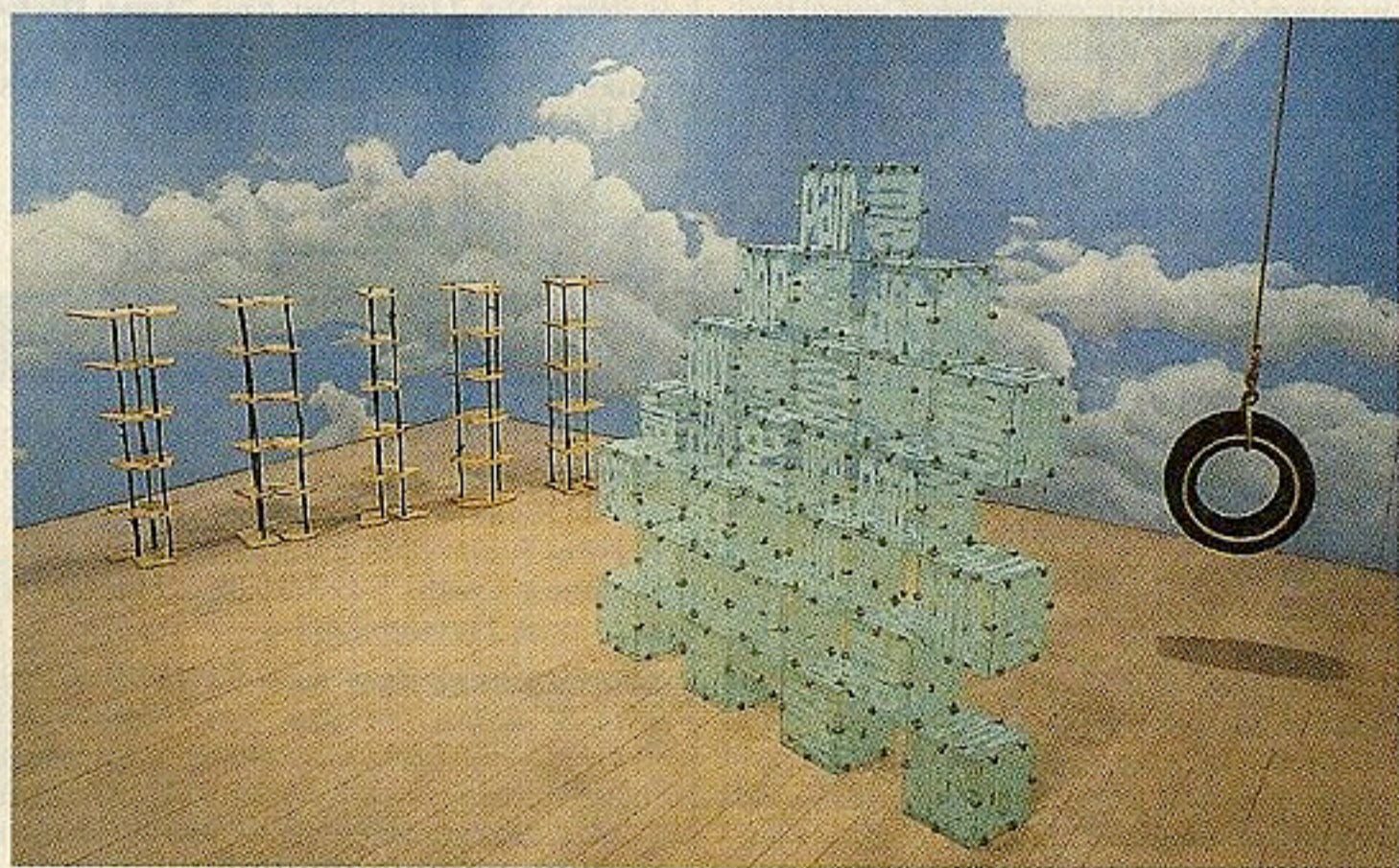


# Time Out

## New York

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Nancy Dwyer, *White Trash, Retread, Wall of Desire (Desire, Despair, Destroy, Destiny)*, 1996.

### Nancy Dwyer Cristinrose Gallery, through May 25 (see Soho)

A number of artists use language in their work. Nancy Dwyer turns it upside-down. In her hands, letters form visual puns, amusing furniture and, in this show, philosophical signs of the times. It's a postliterate future we're facing, Dwyer seems to say. We used to read words and look at pictures. Now, thanks to computerized fonts, we look at words and read pictures.

In a magazine like *Raygun*, you can hardly tell anymore if a word is a word or a picture, and to Dwyer, the distinction obviously still matters. *Future Immune*, for instance, consists of 18 upholstered bar stools lined up in rows of six. Each has a brocade-and-burgundy velvet seat hand-sewn into a let-

ter of the piece's title. The top row spells out "future," the bottom "immune" and the middle is a transitory row of half legible characters. As a group, the stools seem welcoming—but also abandoned and forlorn. This, Dwyer suggests, is what's happening to written language.

*Aging Punks* is a wall piece whose colors and words unfold, accordion-style, as they bleed into one another. *Wall of Desire* has stacking, green-tinted glass cubes sandblasted with a choice of words to attach to the prefix *des*: *-ire*, *-tiny*, *-troy* and *-pair*.

Dwyer's an etymologist, tracing a word's cultural history and watching its meaning change with each new shift in perspective. But the work itself seems too static—you want it to move. Or have I become too used to digital morphing?  
—Linda Yablonsky