

SWISS INSTITUTE / CONTEMPORARY ART
18 Wooster Street
NEW YORK / NY 10013
TEL 212.925.2035
WWW.SWISSINSTITUTE.NET

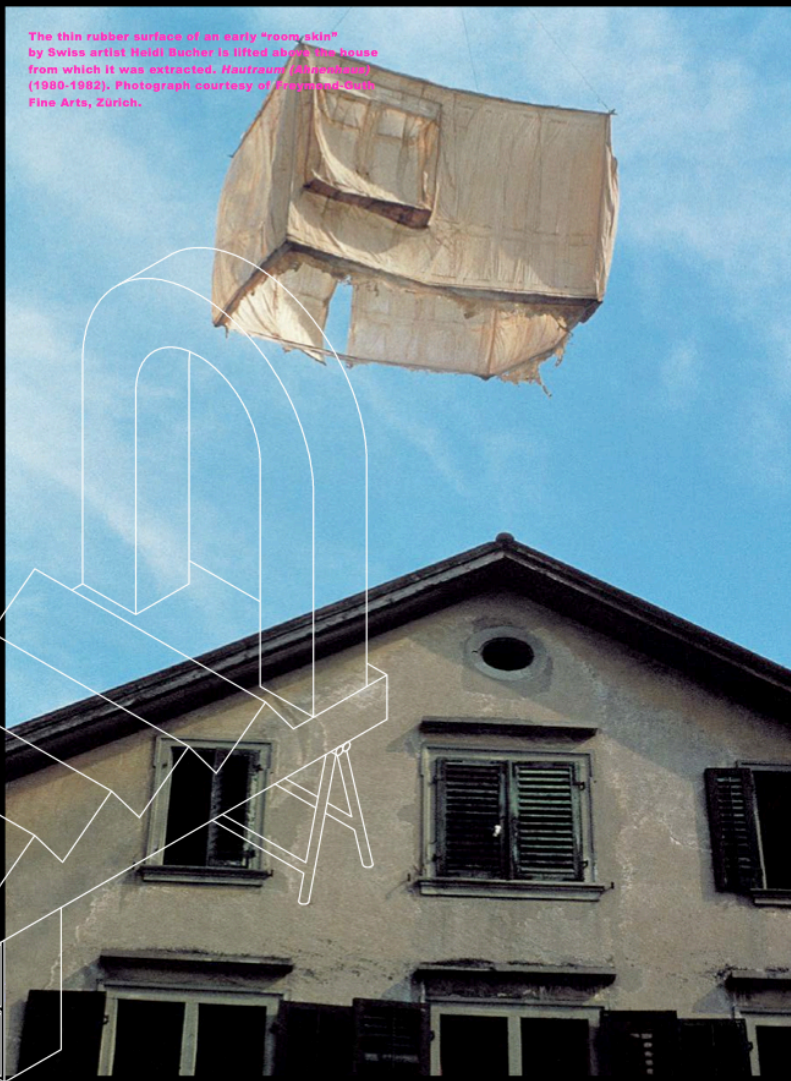
SI

PIN – UP Magazine
Heidi Bucher
Julie Boukobza
Spring Sommer 2014

PIN-UP

APPEAL

The thin rubber surface of an early “room skin” by Swiss artist Heidi Bucher is lifted above the house from which it was extracted. *Hautraum (Abnehmen)* (1980-1982). Photograph courtesy of Magdalena Guba Fine Arts, Zürich.



CAST

When Swiss artist Heidi Bucher (1926–93) was studying fashion at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zürich in the 1940s, one of her first acts was to dip her clothes and underwear in latex. Several decades later, in the late 70s, she applied a similar touch to architecture, casting latex impressions of her parents’ bedroom, her grandparents’ house, a lunatic asylum, or simply her bed-

room’s floor or radiator. Today, what remains of these original gestures is a pearly, translucent skin that has desiccated and hardened. With a number of solo exhibitions in her name, the work of this soft-core Matta Clark (and precursor to Rachel Whiteread) is slowly being rediscovered, most recently thanks to a show at the Swiss Institute in New York. It’s Bucher’s first on American

AWAY



Skin-like latex castings of built elements point to Bucher’s long-time fascination with the relationship between clothing and architecture. Above, a work in progress, *Häutung Bellevue* (1988). © Gaechter & Clahsen

Bucher (below) in 1980 molding the imprint of an entire room in *Hautraum (Abnehmen)*. © Volker Schunck

soil in more than 40 years, and some of the art-works on display, such as the imperial *Grande Albergo Brissago (Eingangsportal)* 1987, a cast of the entrance portal of a since-demolished hotel on Lake Maggiore, have never been shown before in an institutional

context. Also on view are archive films and images, including a two-minute Super 8 made in 1972, in which the hippest family — Heidi and her husband Carl, along with their children Mayo and Indigo — model retro-futuristic foam and fabric sculptures (*Bodyshells*, 1971–74) on Venice Beach. On the main floor, a selection



of Bucher’s building casts (“skin rooms,” as she called them) hang from the Swiss Institute’s double-height gallery, not touching the floor, their suspension in mid air recalling the distance between past and present, memory and loss, or “the way we were,” as Barbra Streisand put it.

Julie Boukobza