

Monica Bonvicini
(Venice, 1965)

Bonded Eternmale, 2002, looks like a private living room awaiting its own host.

The furnishings consist of two chairs and a small table created in 1968 by the designer Willy Guhl. Modified by Monica Bonvicini by a covering of studded black leather and placed atop a gaudy red carpet, the designer objects, in addition to being characterized by a self-contained, undulating line, are distinguished as being the only furniture ever created in Eternit. Continuing her research that began with a previous work entitled *Eternmale*, in this installation the artist is inspired by a series of suggestions published in *Playboy* magazine in the late 1960s for the creation of the perfect bachelor pad. Starting with a model theoretically meant for a male who is able to lure magnificent prey, Bonvicini's installation, as indicated in the wordplay in the title, refers instead to the image of a man who seems to favor extreme sexual practices and perhaps not the company of the women photographed by *Playboy*. Moreover, the presence of Eternit, an as-bestos-cement material developed with the promise of being eternal, but which then proved to be extremely carcinogenic, contains an element of danger that does not seem to benefit the image of its potential owner. Using architecture and sex as the poles of her research, and the totality of gender, desire, and power relationships that link these two terms, Bonvicini is the author of an art that accepts no compromises and exposes the contradictions inherent in the concept of living space, inherited from the modernist tradition. The artist analyzes ideas related to the act of building, according to processes that reveal their strong macho connotations and potentially coercive characteristics. Openly critical, Bonvicini often incorporates process-related elements in her works, on the basis of which deconstruction, understood specifically as an act of destruction, is carried out by visitors when they encounter and thus activate the work. (MB)