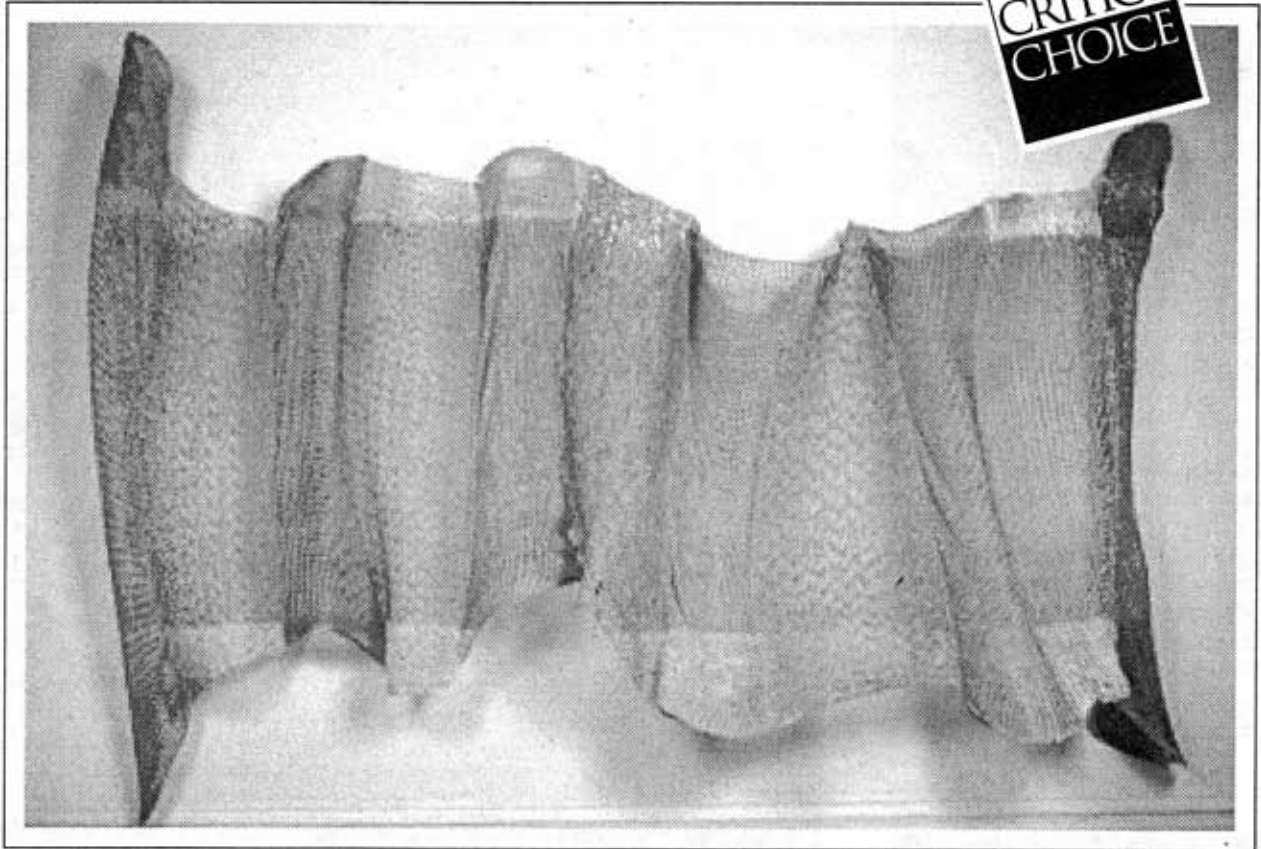


SECTION  
GALLERIES

CRITIC'S  
CHOICE



**Conformity**

## Groupings: Sculpture by Yvette Kaiser Smith

The rear lobby of the Cook County Administration Building is one of those sterile, soporific institutional spaces where calming colors are used in an attempt to conceal the architectural discord between, for instance, the faux grandeur of the high ceilings and the bland escalator openings. Other artists who've installed work here have chosen bold, attention-getting colors, but Yvette Kaiser Smith's two large crocheted fiberglass sculptures blend into the space while subtly critiquing it. In response to the lobby's shades of beige, they offer a dull gray, fringed with pale pink and white. And in response to the building's carelessness, they present a thoughtful chaos. *Conformity* (2002) consists of 11 connected

panels—six cylindrical shapes alternating with five flat ones, curving like a curtain. The mismatched patterns—the rectilinear grids, repeating circles, highly irregular meshes—and the untidy materials and forms suggest a fractured vision in which unity is impossible, even irrelevant. Smith says her theme is “how an individual is affected by the group”—and this is a pretty rambunctious crew. Because the disunity functions, this is subversive art in the best sense. Cook County Administration Building, 69 W. Washington, atrium, through October 5. Hours are 8 to 6 Monday through Friday and 8 to 1 Saturday; 773-324-5520.

—Fred Camper