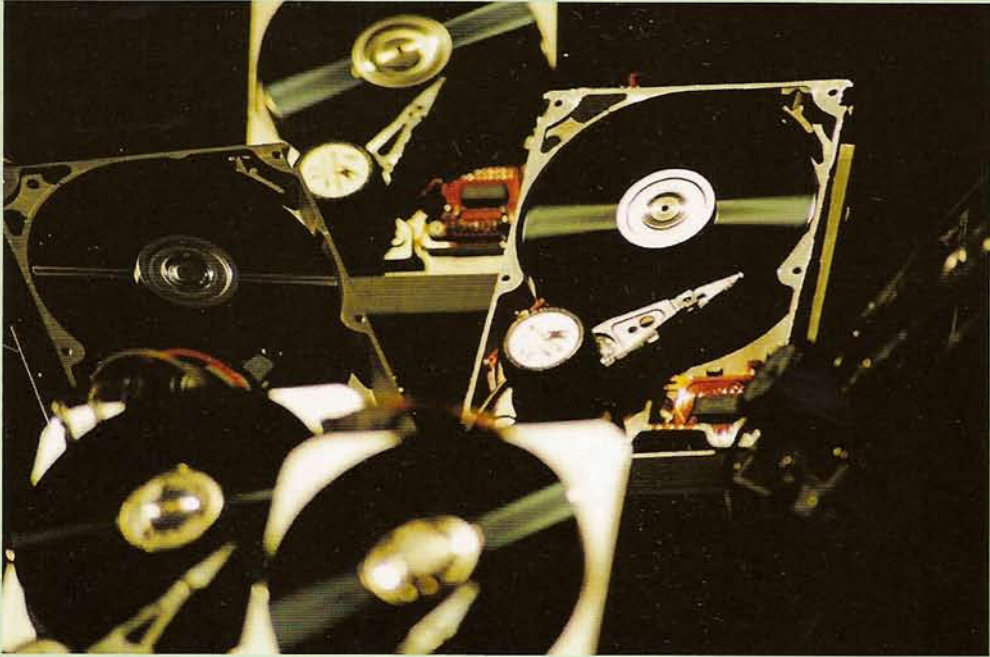Valentina Vuksic's *Harddisko* – or *Noise & Disturbance Amplifier System for Harddisks* – looks like a classic sound sculpture. Sixteen hard disks with their housing removed sit atop small pedestals. When turned on, they perform an initialization procedure: the reading head rhythmically and rapidly checks the hard disk as it spins at high speed. These hard disks are out of order, so that each of them, in its own way, sticks, repeats the procedure, and makes a characteristic ticking sound (which can leave no one who has ever endured a sudden disk crash completely unmoved). Because the hard disks do their job in full view, the parallel with obsolete turntable technology also becomes patently clear. What we hear is an impressively chaotic composition. The sound is amplified, but since each disk is connected to its

Valentina Vuksic, Harddisko *(2004)*

own circuit which switches on and off according to a schedule set by Vuksic, there is variation and layeredness. Sometimes the disks seem to react to each other or carry on a conversation; at other times, they all chatter at once. *Harddisko* is also a game played with (malfunctioning) contemporary technology, a literal breaking of the black box of technology. Broken things are transformed into a sublime sound sculpture (watch the hard disks spin awkwardly and powerlessly ...).

The title of *Death before Disko*, a sculpture by **Herwig Weiser**, is a reference to the classic techno record by Christian Morgenstern. Like the hard drives in *Harddisko, Death before Disko* seeks to show us the innards of technology. Weiser says he is resisting the trend in consumer electronics whereby complex technology is becoming more and more cleverly shrouded in immaculate design: white plastic boxes with one button, user surfaces that no longer tell you anything about what is going on underneath. The iPod is the symbol of this superficial consumer relationship to technology. Weiser wants to show us the beauty and complexity of the raw components: the material through which the information flows. Using the plastics, metals, magnets,