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SFMOMA PRESENTS NEW WORK: RACHEL HARRISON

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) will present *New Work: Rachel Harrison* from November 12, 2004, through March 13, 2005. This second exhibition in the *New Work* series features work by Brooklyn-based sculptor Rachel Harrison in her West Coast debut. Incorporating diverse and unusual materials such as commodity goods, photographs, video images, and lumpy forms coated in cement and bright paint, Harrison's eccentric sculptures draw upon major artistic movements of the twentieth century, from Pop art to Minimalism. Positioned somewhere between the handmade and the readymade, these hybrid constructions recast the status of sculpture today.

In July 2004, SFMOMA reinaugurated the *New Work* series, which was conceived in 1987 as a means to feature the best and most innovative expressions of contemporary art. Changing three times a year, the series affirms the Museum's commitment to presenting vital work by the artists of our time. Previous exhibitions have featured artists such as Jasper Johns, Glenn Ligon, Kerry James Marshall, Tatsuo Miyajima, Doris Salcedo, Kara Walker, and Andrea Zittel.

Organized by SFMOMA Curatorial Associate Jill Dawsey, *New Work: Rachel Harrison* will feature four mixed-media sculptures installed on the fifth floor in conjunction with *Between Art and Life: The Contemporary Painting and Sculpture Collection*, a presentation of post-1960 contemporary art from the Museum's collection.

Hail to Reason (Blue), 2004, is a tall, craggy form covered in lumps and protrusions, painted an iridescent pale blue, and incorporating a package of doilies. Like many of Harrison's sculptures, the piece contains partially hidden elements: a portable DVD player embedded in a recess in the sculpture displays documentation of a rural auction in upstate New York. This incorporation points to a world of ordinary objects outside the realm of art and suggests a tension between "high art" and "common culture."

Cindy (Green), 2004, presents a rectangular white wall with the top of a blond head visible just behind it, creating the unsettling impression of a person hiding behind the sculpture. Viewed from the side, the piece reveals a startling, chartreuse structure made of vertical and horizontal slats slathered in stucco. A wig hangs at the top, as if placed on a coat rack. The white rectangle—a piece of sheetrock—leans against the awkward tower. *Cindy's* construction seems to distill domestic architecture to its basics: a wall, some furniture, a stucco exterior, and a woman.

Blazing Saddles, 2003, is a four-sided pillar covered by clusters of blocky, brick-like units and monochromatically painted a dark, muddy bronze. A black-and-white photograph of Lucille Ball hangs on one side; an antique box of Campbell's barbecue beans sits on top. The sculpture acts like a kiosk—a structure set up for the display of images or other items—but it also recalls the form of a chimney; a framed opening near the bottom indicates a fireplace, and the framed photo seems to hang above a nonexistent mantelpiece. Harrison also references art movements in this sculpture,

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the boxy pillar a riff on the geometric monoliths of Minimalism and the Campbell's box an unmistakable allusion to Andy Warhol's famous copies of grocery boxes.

Marilyn with Wall, 2004, contains several wall fragments excised from SFMOMA's own building. Stacked and leaning against a gallery wall, the foremost wall fragment retains its status as display surface, holding a framed photograph of Marilyn Monroe, the source image used for Warhol's iconic paintings of the actress. For the current installation, Harrison made a site-specific incision in the gallery wall, removing a roughly four-foot by sixteen-foot piece of its surface and exposing the internal structure. Tilted vertically and leaned against an adjacent wall, the extricated piece becomes the backdrop for additional segments of walls removed from the galleries during a recent Frank Stella exhibition at the Museum. *Marilyn with Wall* literally deconstructs the museum, presenting it as a kind of stage set for art objects.

Born in 1966 in New York City, Harrison received her B.A. in fine art from Wesleyan University in 1989. She has had solo exhibitions at Greene Naftali Gallery, New York; Camden Art Center, London; Bergen Kunsthalle, Gallery No. 5, Norway; the Milwaukee Art Museum; Ardt & Partner, Berlin; and the Oakville Gallery, Toronto. Her work also was included in the fifty-fourth Carnegie International, Pittsburg, in 2004; *Open House: Working in Brooklyn* at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, in 2004; *The Structure of Survival* at the 2003 Venice Biennale; the 2002 Whitney Biennial, New York; and in group presentations at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Harrison will join SFMOMA Curatorial Associate Dawsey at the Museum at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 11, for the program Rachel Harrison's Mixed-Up Media, an artist talk in the Phyllis Wattis Theater. At noon on Friday, January 28, Dawsey will discuss how Harrison's handcrafted works are forging new ground for sculpture in the program The Unusual Suspect: The Sculpture of Rachel Harrison. Additional program information is available on the Museum's Web site at www.sfmoma.org.

The *New Work* series is generously supported by Collector's Forum, an auxiliary of SFMOMA and the founding patron of the series. Major funding is also provided by Mimi and Peter Haas, Nancy and Steven Oliver, Robin Wright, and the Betlach Family Foundation.

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Hours: Open daily (except Wednesdays) 11 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; open late Thursdays until 8:45 p.m. Summer hours (Memorial Day to Labor Day): open at 10 a.m. Closed Wednesdays and the following public holidays: Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day.

General Admission prices: Adults \$10; seniors \$7; students \$6. SFMOMA members and children twelve and under are admitted free. The first Tuesday of each month admission is free. Thursday evenings, 6 to 9 p.m., admission is half price.

SFMOMA is easily accessible by Muni, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans and Caltrain. Hourly, daily and monthly parking is available at the SFMOMA Garage at 147 Minna Street. For parking information, call 415.348-0971.

Visit our Web site at www.sfmoma.org or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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