

**SPERONE WESTWATER**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Tom Sachs: "ANIMALS"**

8 May – 21 June 2008

Opening: 8 May, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Sperone Westwater is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Tom Sachs entitled *ANIMALS*. Sachs will divide the gallery space into ten small rooms, each containing individual works. Whether literally depicted, or figuratively alluded to, animals will dominate this exhibition of approximately 25 freestanding and wall-mounted paintings and sculptures. Even in the maze-like configuration of the gallery space, Sachs aims to explore the presence of the "animalistic" in our everyday lives.

Each of Sachs' work is handmade using plywood, foamcore, synthetic polymer paint, hardware, and found or scavenged objects which Sachs reclaims for his own purposes. The rough-hewn appearance of each work reflects Sachs' continued exploration of bricolage, or a "do-it-yourself" aesthetic. The artist makes no attempt to mask his process. Rather, he reveals the signs of his labor, mistakes, and corrections. The level of speed Sachs adopts in the construction of each piece is therefore deliberate, as it determines how perfected each object ends up looking. In certain instances, such as the several large wood burnings on view, the process is slow and laborious. In other cases, as in certain sculptures and lamps, it is important to the artist that the object be finished quickly. *Hardcore* (2007-2008), the third in a series of large-scale gun chests inspired by Renaissance dueling cabinets, exemplifies Sachs' work ethic well: it displays a cupboard full of handmade wooden guns along with the tools that were used in their fabrication. This deliberate display of the "history" of each gun emphasizes the handmade quality of the piece in contrast to the sleek perfection of the mass-produced objects to which we have become accustomed. In discussing his work ethic with critic, Germano Celant, Sachs says: "...I often build things in the "wrong" way. [...] There is an honesty and a soulfulness to doing it yourself."

In *ANIMALS*, Sachs continues to explore his signature appropriation of popular consumer objects, iconography, and signage. Logos, such as Spyderco, Bösendorfer, and Raytheon, along with images of the U.S. dollar bill, are boldly inserted into his paintings and sculptures. In *Assaulting* (2007), a punitive warning is transformed into a formal composition. Also on view are a number of white foamcore "paintings" reconstituted from smashed models of the popular animated characters Hello Kitty, Miffy, and My Melody.

A number of handmade yet operable machines have also been placed throughout the show. Some, such as a functional plywood piano and several lamps, are clearly related to commonly used and already existing devices. Other contraptions, however, are truly of the artist's own invention. In *LaGuardia* (2006-2007), Sachs has built a cat tower equipped to serve its feline master for all necessary functions, such as feeding and litter box cleanup. In *Waffle Bike* (2007), Sachs has manufactured a waffle-maker-bicycle, which includes components to hold ingredients like Pam cooking spray, whipped cream, and lingonberry jam.

This exhibition coincides with the unveiling of a major Sachs presentation of public works at Lever House at 390 Park Avenue, which will be on view from 8 May to 6 September 2008. For this specially commissioned project, Sachs has fabricated large-scale bronze sculptures of the Hello Kitty, Miffy, and My Melody characters, in addition to bronze renderings of DuraLast and DieHard battery towers, a garbage dumpster, and skateboard quarter pipes. These sculptures will be installed throughout the Lever House lobby and garden.

Tom Sachs was born in Manhattan in 1966 and grew up in Westport, Connecticut. After studying at the Architectural Association in London in 1987, he received a B.A. from Bennington College, Vermont, in 1989. Major solo exhibitions of his work have been presented at SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico (1999); the Bohen Foundation, New York (2002); Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin (2003); the Astrup Fearnley Museet for Moderne Kunst, Oslo (2006); the Fondazione Prada, Milan (2006); and the Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, which traveled to the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA (2007). Sachs currently lives and works in New York.

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