

**SPERONE WESTWATER**  
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**Tom Sachs: WORK**

4 November – 17 December 2011

“I thank the Lord I'm allowed to work every day.” – James Brown  
“The reward for good work is more work.” – Tom Sachs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New York, NY: 4 October 2011** - Sperone Westwater is pleased to present new paintings and sculptures by Tom Sachs in the artist's third solo exhibition at the gallery. Sachs has a reverence for the ritual act of work itself and the sculptures and paintings he creates are artifacts of his devotion. Sachs “shows his work” by emphasizing the presence of the human hand, to remind the viewer of the labor involved in the creation of objects. Influenced by a range of historic objects and cultural iconography -- Sèvres porcelain, traditional African symbols, Pop, NASA, and the singer and songwriter James Brown (“the hardest working man in show business”) -- Sachs addresses the conception, production, consumption and circulation of modern-day creativity by refashioning the world out of simple stuff. This exhibition precedes Sachs' major interactive exhibition, *ASTRONAUTS TRAINING MANUAL; SPACE PROGRAM 2.0: MARS*, co-presented by Creative Time and Park Avenue Armory, and on view at Park Avenue Armory in New York from May – June 2012.

The show begins with Sachs' plywood, glass and metal model of the recently built Sperone Westwater gallery, surrounded by paintings that reference several periods of interest to the artist: *Duridium* (2008) is made after the famous Lichtenstein work, but here out of screws and plywood; *Viagra Gold* (2008) has compositional ties to Op Art; and *Muhammad Ali Poem to James Brown* (2009), and *James Brown's Hair Products* (2009), relate to color studies by artists such as Albers and Richter. Several of these paintings incorporate Sachs' innovative technique of pyrography, where “paint strokes” are burned and etched into the wood surface.

Works in the East Room emphasize the range and beauty of things that can be made out of the very basic medium of plywood. For *Cinderblock* (2011), the artist creates a laminated cinderblock structure out of resin and plywood, a material commonly used for basic construction, into a Minimalist form. *Cock* (2010-11) harnesses the power of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Nigerian ceremonial sculpture, *Rooster Figure*, by including a slot for coin donations to be made in honor of the ceremonial chief. A new body of work, the *Sèvres Collection*, will be on display in the dimly lit Moving Room. These sculptures are based on late 18-century porcelain objects from the French town of Sèvres that were manufactured by Louis XV, and sought after by the French nobility. Using plastic animal figurines, glue, foam core, and resin molded from a woman's breast, Sachs creates his version of the famous Sèvres “breast cup” that belonged to Marie-Antoinette.

In the *James Brown* series, Sachs celebrates James Brown's (“The Godfather of Soul”), religion of work. Not only a musician, but also a key figure who helped define African American and American culture in the 20th century, Brown reinvented himself and innovated his industry many times over. Everyday objects from Brown's life have now become collectible relics. Sachs uses these real artifacts as a starting point for works in his *James Brown* series. In *James Brown's Last Supper* (2009) and *Dome* (2011), Sachs conflates the art of the ready-made, found object with intensely fabricated, craft-oriented details.

Tom Sachs was born in Manhattan in 1966 and grew up in Westport, Connecticut. After studying at the Architectural Association in London in 1987, Sachs received a B.A. from Bennington College in Vermont in 1989. Major solo exhibitions 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); the Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, which traveled to the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA (2007); the Lever House, New York (2008); and the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut (2009). Sachs' work is featured at the 2011 Bienal de São Paulo in *In the Name of the Artists - American Contemporary Art from the Astrup Fearnley Collection*. Sachs' work can be found in museum collections around the world. The artist currently lives and works in New York.

An opening reception for the artist will be held from 6-8 pm on 4 November. For more information and images, please contact Maryse Brand at 212-999-7337 or [maryse@speronewestwater.com](mailto:maryse@speronewestwater.com).