

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RACHEL HARRISON

Latka/Latkas

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Rachel Harrison's recent show at Greene Naftali was more like that long absurdist riddle about an elephant in a bathtub ending with the incomprehensible punch line, "No soap, radio." Across the floor are arranged bashed together wood constructions, conceivably animal, which are given some sort of unity by agglomerations of plaster and sprayed in colours of Jean Fautrier nastiness. And then there was Rachel Harrison's what-the-hell-is-that? sculpture. And just around the corner was the funniest piece of misappropriation art this side of the 1980s. "I had layed concrete since I was a kid," she recalls. "When I was in sixth grade I bought this Tascam cement mixer where you can shovel in sand and then bump it back and forth." And still it is a wonder that the work is still standing.

I can't really get anywhere with the work of the second New Yorker here, Rachel Harrison. Why the Virgin Cola can wedged in the globs? Why the aerosol air-freshener or the second video on the wall and the cheap charm bracelets hung on the slats of the bench in the corner? Why is all this called Posh Floored As Ali G Tackles Becks? Excuse me? Painting may spring out of Lascaus and sculpture out the Laocoön, but do we read a porcelain Aunt Jemima sugar bowl as a degraded form, a "parody of catharsis," in Adorno's words, merely because the source material is not original, totemic, possessed of prime irreducibility? Or does the deft compositional humor generate an inquiry into the nature of received visions? Whichever, you get the feeling that some connection was made, and that sense of process is preserved here like a fly in amber.

I found that piece with the little camera to be so disconcerting and annoying that when I found myself in the vicinity a second time, I had the same impulse to flee.

In much of Harrison's work, there is a kind of internal tug-of-war of elements, what the formalists called "relational" with respect to composition, extended to include social, economic, material, and "mediation" factors. And while other deployments of discontinuity and non sequitor often lead you back to an interpretive place, a place of thought, Harrison's work leads you to a place of non-thought, looking at the specific thing before you. The sculptures sit in the room like yearning creatures caked in the sludge of capitalist desire. Nothing here really seems anchored: like an acrobat, these impermanent materials put on a tour de force of formalistic skill. If social possibility is to be found here, it is in the way of families with nothing much to talk about any more. The art equivalent to being stranded in an airport. So if you find her peculiar combination of accidental-looking photos and found objects (such as fake boulders) a bit taxing, I feel your pain. Physical and perceptual walls will feature prominently in this, her fourth solo show at Greene Naftali Gallery.

The hours stretch away to eternity. Rachel Harrison also plays with her food.

(All of these sentences have been borrowed from texts on Rachel Harrison. Please contact the gallery for more information. info@greenenaftaligallery.com)