

Susan Hobbs

Liz Magor

7 May to 20 June 2009



Liz Magor: *Stack (Racoon)*, 2009, polymerized gypsum, ash, wood, 58 x 68 x 68 cm

Liz Magor's sculptural reiteration of familiar objects explores ideas around the subjective interaction with the material world, including both our controlled and irrational use of things. Using her distinctive casting method in polymerized gypsum, she operates at a level of visual deception—or embellishment, if you will—that manipulates our expectations of the real and the simulated. In previous bodies of work, cast objects became the foil for provisions such as chocolates, liquor or cigarettes, generating an allure that appealed to the innate impulses of the aesthete and the addict.

In this exhibition, she swaps the clandestine for the candid, creating three new works that take the form of domestic service objects, such as ashtrays, dishes and coffee tables. Alongside things such as placemats, wiping cloths and serving trays, ashtrays occupy one of the lower rungs in the hierarchy of domestic objects. In their familiar settings, they too are embellished, taking the form of decorative sculpture to disguise their purpose as receptacles of base material. Using these vessels of high utility as models for these works serves as a strategy to not only reconsider the function of the represented object, but also questions the role of the sculpture itself. Magor's works are, in her words, "concatenations of dependencies", a reference not only to the accretions of discarded goods and vices that appeal to our common impulses, but also to the physical supports that are subsumed into the whole, upending our expectations of what these sculptures are. As Magor has written, "It is hard to figure out which thing is the proper or preferred sculpture. It should be the coat because it displays the craft and skill normally associated with art, but here it's just a receptacle for cigarette ashes." As sculptures they have given up their position as the "top" object in the room, assuming instead an attitude of patient waiting.

Susan Hobbs Gallery Inc.
137 Tecumseth Street
Toronto, Canada M6J 2H2
Telephone 416 504 3699
Facsimile 416 504 8064