

Richard Hughes

May 21 – July 3, 2010

May 5, 2010—For his second solo show at Anton Kern Gallery, London-based artist Richard Hughes has turned the gallery into a seemingly demolished urban space including derelict foundations of a house, a doorway boarded-up with rotting MDF, and neglected cast-iron Victorian lamp posts. Dozens of tied-together pairs of sneakers flung onto low-hanging overhead utility wires, a practice known as *shoefiti*, are suspended into the space. A polygonal rose window, set into the wall of the back gallery, appears as a large taleidoscopic and psychedelic image.



The exhibition consists of ordinary, sometimes slightly repulsive objects that might be found in a hovel of a rooming house or unceremoniously dumped by the side of the road — bleak monuments to abused domestic or public spaces. Their placement in a gallery space, however, instantly invites questions as to its recent history, use, and function, or imminent action. Upon closer inspection, all objects reveal themselves as casts, meticulously crafted replicas of every-day things injected with an element of fantasy. The beauty within this ostensibly abandoned world lies in the moment of surprise when materials reveal themselves as “fakes.” This is the moment when hidden images and cultural memories become visible and intelligible, when the vernacular becomes a universal language.

Hughes’ sculptures are not ready-mades. As facsimiles of common objects it’s not the object that is transformed but its meaning and ability to speak to the viewer. Gradually, these objects-turned-sculptures reveal their inherent capacity to tell stories, to evoke narratives that are charged with everyday-life experience and humor. Just as a taleidoscope, a variation of the closed mirror kaleidoscope, permits the view of the real world beyond the lens.

Hughes’ work has been exhibited in one-person shows at the Tate Britain (2006) and The Showroom, London (2004). Recent group shows include *Mapping the studio: Artists from the François Pinault Collection*, Venice (2009); the *55th Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh (2008); *When We Build, Let Us Think We Build Forever*, Baltic Gateshead, UK; *Clarke and McDevitt Present: Expect Nothing*, Gallery For One, Dublin (both 2007); *Strange I’ve Seen That Face Before* at the Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, Germany (2006), and *British Art Show* at the Baltic Art Center, Gateshead (2005), subsequently touring to Manchester, Nottingham, and Bristol. In 2006, Hughes was nominated for the Beck’s Futures award and his work included in the accompanying exhibition at the ICI, London.

The exhibition will open on Friday, May 21, and run through Saturday, July 3, 2010. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact Christoph Gerozissis at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: info@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming exhibitions: Shio Kusaka (July 8 – August 13, 2008)

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