

Casey Cook: *Boom Bomb Crash*

November 8–December 20, 2008

Opening Reception: Saturday November 8, 5–8pm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Branch Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Casey Cook titled *Boom Bomb Crash*. Cook mounts her second exhibition at the gallery with new paintings as well as collage works, sculpture, and a multi-channel video installation.

In a pair of large-scale paintings, Cook continues to develop her visual lexicon. With a sophisticated use of line and unexpected color, she creates a complex juxtaposition of forms that fill the canvas with multi-faceted metamorphoses. Pyramids, hieroglyphics, 1950s–60s fashion, still-life tableaus, and graffiti intertwine; telling a new story rife with the reinvention of meaning—a historical mash-up.

Cook cites the Droste Effect as an influence. “An image exhibiting the Droste effect depicts a smaller version of itself in a place where a similar picture would realistically be expected to appear. This smaller version then depicts an even smaller version of itself in the same place, and so on. Only in theory could this go on forever.” Each of Cook’s works seem to hint to themselves and one another. She weaves her narrative through various media; a story may start in a painting, then continue on in a sculpture, and reappear in a video, and so on, and so on.

Cook has expanded her practice off of the canvas and into new three-dimensional sculptural works that continue the development of her unique visual iconography. Borrowing the idea of transformation from the Dadaists and Surrealists, Cook assigns new meaning to series of used artifacts using molds and papier-mâché. She transforms everyday objects (e.g. thrift-store sofa cushions, balloons, high-heeled shoes) into exalted instruments; decorated and full of new meaning. At times carnivalesque and at other times sedately formal, the multifaceted surfaces of these works—employing images culled from erotic ads and pornographic magazines—hint at the complex nature of desire.

Cook’s video is based on the personification of musical instruments. In the performance, Cook appears at the helm of a human drum kit; comprised of seven women in silver unitards, white gloves, and black heels. The artist states, “I like the use of something absolutely silent (a mime) to represent something so loud (music/drums). It ends up being about the physical movements. The reaction of the drums to the sticks (conductor) playing the drums. Through repetition and uniformity of costume and movement, the performance takes on qualities of a ritual; a rite of passage; an induction ceremony. Something vaguely familiar and historical, yet indecipherable.”

Cook, who is based in North Carolina, received her MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1997. She has had solo exhibitions at venues such as Lehmann Maupin, NY and Richard Heller Gallery, CA; and has participated in group exhibitions at venues including Deitch Projects, NY; Pat Hearn Gallery, NY; and Matthew Marks Gallery, NY.

For more information, please contact Teka Selman or Chloë Seymore at info@branchgallery.com or 919.918.1116.

Gallery Hours: Wed–Sat 12–6 or by appt.

401c Foster Street Durham, NC 27701 919 918-1116

info@branchgallery.com | www.branchgallery.com