
TOM SACHS

DRAWINGS FROM 2000-2010

PARIS DEBELLEYME

10 Monday - 19 Saturday



"Bricolage comes from culture that repairs rather than replaces - American culture just replaces."
- Tom Sachs

For his fifth solo show in the Paris gallery, Tom Sachs has selected an iconic group of drawings from the last decade covering the central themes of his oeuvre related to American society and culture. Works on paper have always been an integral and important part of Tom Sachs's practice and this is the first time an entire exhibition is dedicated to this relevant and direct means of communication.

While a part of Sachs's drawings are sketches for an idea of a sculpture, a way to conceptualize his projects (for example the McDonald's drawings and Waffle Bike, 2007), some of them take on the form of diagrams, floor plans, or lists, becoming almost text-based. In the floor plans of Room 134 at the Claridge's (2008) or the Indochine Restaurant (2008) Sachs draws the minutia of every area, angle, furniture, object, and sign, as well as a detailed list of names of those in the restaurant that day.

In the same way that Sachs's foamcore sculptures are born out of bricolage, in which the hand of the artist is visible, the covered up or concealed mistakes remain apparent in the drawings and reveal the artist's thought process as it unfolds before the eyes of the viewer. Often what looks like a disordered accumulation of unrelated ideas belies his own very instinctive sense of order. Different ideas are represented in the same way; the drawings can be associated to carpentry because of their labor-intensive aspect. As Gunnar B. Kvaran explains, "The world of Tom Sachs is an ambitious and focused enumeration of things and phenomena that characterize our standardized way of living."

For example, in the various McDonald's drawings in the show, Sachs, on the one hand praises free enterprise, yet often shows how a successful business model can be underpinned with violence and discrimination, the flipside of American society (see Equipment (2009) in which the artist asks if we can spot the intruders). To the question "Is Sachs's work critical or celebratory?" one is probably tempted to reply, both.

In one of his most recent drawings, done on a 1:1 surf board scale, titled Not to Scale (2010) Sachs maps out our solar system, the periodic table of elements, the electromagnetic spectrum, the orders of magnitude with a time-line - running through the middle of the large drawing - of evolution, major inventions and key events.

Slightly different in their aesthetics, Sachs has selected a group of what he calls "fancy drawings" that are delicate pencil, ink and watercolor works on vellum. In these, he concentrates on one particular object - such as a cassette tape, a condom, a pack of cigarettes and a NYC parking ticket - conferring it a precious quality despite the banality of the object.

Tom Sachs (b. 1966) lives and works in New York. After studying at the Architectural Association in London in 1987, he received a BA from Bennington College, Vermont, in 1989.

His work has been widely shown in Europe and in the United States, including recent solo exhibitions such as Tom Sachs: Bronze Collection at the Lever House, New York (2008), Logjam at the Des Moines Art Center, Iowa (2007), Tom Sachs at Fondazione Prada, Milan, Tom Sachs - Survey: America, Modernism, Fashion at the Astrup Fearnley Museet for Moderne Kunst in Oslo (2006) and NUTSY_s at the Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin (2003). His work is included in major museum collections: Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York and the Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco.