
TOM SACHS

DISASTER (FEATURING ANDY WARHOL)

PARIS DEBELLEYME

01 Saturday - 01 Tuesday



Raymond Devos, the French humourist, declared, « to succeed is to narrowly avoid crash and burning. »

The work of Tom Sachs, now showing at Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac echoes this statement. Through his medium of scaled down models Sachs suggests that the cutting edge technology of today heralds the disasters of tomorrow.

Inspired by Andy Warhol's « Disaster » paintings and industrial model making, Tom Sachs has chosen to exhibit with works by Warhol. Sachs shows the vehicle in its intact state while Warhol's « Disaster » series shows the modern machine icon as a frail, destructible entity. Sachs' models represent the « before » to Warhol's disastrous « after ». The tension in Sachs' work lies in the anticipation of this crash.

Tom Sachs was born in the USA, land of media and technological advancement. The thirty six years old artist has been working for two years on this air craft series. Included in the show are models of the famous Concorde, the DC10 and the media hyped Piper Saratoga, the plane in which JFK Junior was killed. Following in the same vein as his latest exhibition, in which works were interspersed with NASA machinery, a model of the Challenger space shuttle plus launch pad is on show. Sachs seems to experience a love hate relationship with technology. Fascinated by the future, but wary nonetheless.

This is the first time these pieces have been shown in France, but put on your seat belt, as every frequent flyer knows, no flight is without turbulence...

Here, Sachs's art takes the form of small-scale (1 :25) models in foam core. Sachs uses this cheap, unglamorous material for its anonymous quality. Foam core represents the opposite extreme to the glossy fashion package. Through this styled form of « bricolage » Sachs depicts the sophisticated machine as nothing more than an object put together with glue and tape. Technological advance spells disaster, Concorde will crash land while Sachs's police barricades, also depicted in small scale, lights up the runway...The juxtaposition of Warhol and Sachs underlines the need to address and better understand the dangers of our consumer obsessed society.

The model is the definitive kids toy, it gives us the ability to construct then manipulate the world of adults, and ultimately to play God. The models inspire a reassessment of the not-so-distant horror of 09/11. In the same way as a plane glides through space, Sachs's sculpture hang in mid air. Wings spanning two to three meters across highlight the ghostly appearance of these spirits within which lurk the latent figures of war.

We first witnessed Sachs's vision back in 1999, when he exhibited Creativity is the enemy at Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac. Such powerful works as « Chanel guillotine » and « Prada Concentration Camp » were on show : the modern world is far from indestructible ; we are dancing on a volcano.

Tom Sachs's installation « Nutsy » will be exhibited at The Guggenheim Museum, Berlin, from July 24 to October 5, 2003.