

## TOM SACHS

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### VANITY

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

01 Friday - 31 Sunday

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"When you lose an eye or a leg, you get a glass eye or a peg leg. And when you lose culture, you get some of the things we do here.[...] I'm trying to make a substitute for the things that are missing in my life "  
Tom Sachs, 2003

Tom Sachs's turbulent entrance to the New York gallery scene coincided with a Christmas window display he designed in 1994 for the department store Barneys. His nativity scene combined the Japanese merchandising wonder Hello Kitty as Baby Jesus, Bart Simpson in triplicate as the Three Kings, and the pregnant Madonna Ciccone as the Virgin Mary. Right-wing Christian groups went on the warpath, the allegedly blasphemous scene appeared on the title page of the New York Daily News, and the controversial ensemble was removed after only one day. From this point onwards, the international art world focused its attention on Tom Sachs, acclaiming him, with his typically American home-made replicas of consumer and cultural icons, as the most legitimate successor to Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol.

His techniques and tactics are rooted in furniture design and in the world of fashion. His controversial commission at Barneys had been preceded by numerous jobs in the art field. Sachs (b 1966) graduated from Bennington College in Vermont and studied at the famous London Architectural Association, after which he assisted the architect Frank O. Gehry in the production of a series of chairs for Knoll, worked for the top English designer Tom Dixon (later head of design at Habitat), designed shopping trolleys for Dries van Noten and made clothing-racks for Azzedine Alaïa.

Allied Cultural Prosthetics is the name of the workshop in Lower Manhattan where, since the early 1990s, Tom Sachs and his team of co-workers have produced art which has found its way into many international museums and public collections.

With Allied Cultural Prosthetics, Sachs offers a "low fashion model" as an alternative to the design teams, PR departments and creative tanks of the "high fashion industry". For their production Sachs and his team, using resources already to hand, combine functional and completely useless objects to give them a new function, with the aid of glue-guns, expanded plastic slabs and materials from DIY stores. They are hobbyists and collectors who prefer amateur improvisation to the industrial production of standardised goods.

A highlight of Tom Sachs's career was his mammoth installation Nutsy's, shown in 2003 at the New York Bohemian Foundation and in 2004 at the Guggenheim Museum in Berlin. He interprets this installation as "a way of connecting these themes that I'd been working on for years: sound systems, weaponry, status, shopping, dwellings". Nutsy's is a 1,400 m<sup>2</sup> world on a scale of 1:25, with models of Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation apartment complex, Mies van der Rohe furniture, a McDonald's restaurant, a 10,000-watt boom box, a ghetto, a modernist sculpture park and a DJ booth. Sachs developed a complete infrastructure for Nutsy's. In the '90s, his works were isolated prototypes or sets of objects already pointing towards a complex, coherent cosmos.

Our exhibition shows new sculptures, drawings and "woodburnings" (paintings burnt into wood) by Tom Sachs.