

Alexandre da Cunha

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Press Release

Alexandre da Cunha's works play with the idea of appropriation and the use of everyday utilitarian objects, stripping them of their original use value and combining them to create new structures. Abstract compositions made of bathroom mats on large canvases; modernist large sculptures made of concrete and Brancusi columns made of household utensils nod to the History and techniques of High Art with an air of dollar store aesthetic. The two dimensional work refer to notions of Abstraction, Crafts and Design; their titles – Arcadia, Jasmine, Nouveaux etc- are appropriations of the brands of the materials used in the works. They suggest a change of the status of the objects where the brand and its name have the power to lead the viewer to another, perhaps imaginary, place.

Another series of works titled Haute Couture presents a collection of found tea-towels that have been altered through the addition of stylized famous logos. The desirable brands are incorporated to the towels' original embroideries; they talk about objects of desire through the eyes of an ordinary everyday life. Public Sculptures follow a path that has been more recently developed within his three-dimensional work where the artist explores a classic repertoire of sculptural representation. Through the use of cheap materials he creates elegant busts, heads, columns and totems. The new large pieces that refer to monuments, resemble rigid round rings made of concrete and foam. The combination of almost incompatible materials creates a tension that is emphasized when the original function of those materials is revealed to the viewer. The works deal with issues of formalism, such as shape, technique, and materiality but his practice also has an essential playfulness and humor. Moreover the discussion of change of status of the objects expresses a wider concern with the human condition, in particular a critique of the distribution of wealth.

Alexandre da Cunha (born Rio de Janeiro, 1969) is currently exhibiting in Passengers at the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco. He has a forthcoming solo exhibition at Sommer and Kohl in Berlin and has just finished his solo- show at Vilma Gold Gallery in London.

Link

www.galerialuisastrina.com.br/exposicoes/alexandre-da-cunha-2008

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