

Allison Smith

Pitcher Collection

September 9 - October 23, 2010

Please join us for the opening reception
on Thursday, September 9, 2010,
5:30PM – 7:30PM

SAN FRANCISCO Haines Gallery is pleased to present Allison Smith: *Pitcher Collection*, a series of over one hundred new works on paper in which images of quotidian objects are meticulously cut out of context and serially collaged onto sheets of handmade paper. As the exhibition's title suggests, Smith offers a playful confusion between image and object, proposing pictures of material culture as both physical material and subject of study.

Objects that are emblematic, if not iconic, of colonial-era American craft, including stoneware jugs, painted chests, and canopy beds, largely populate this visual lexicon. Each evincing an arresting, undeniable presence, either alone, in pairs, or in charged relation to others, the objects pictured exhibit an uncanny anthropomorphism that verges on the erotic.

This work represents an attempt by Smith to “process” ideas, taking stock of and making visible a subjective inventory of images that she has used as studio reference material for many years, from former museum picture archives, auction catalogs, how-to books on colonial craft, and interior decorating magazines. Indeed, there are pictures of pitchers and many other objects that are containers for latent metaphors and meanings. In addition to the pre-modern crafts, embedded in the works are obscure references to decorative arts and design history, the Arts & Crafts Movement, the studio craft movement, and to modern and contemporary art as well.

Since 2005, Allison Smith has been making sculptures, many of which are monumental versions of 19th Century toys, that serve as provocative centerpieces and post-event artifacts of large-scale gatherings such as military encampments, parades, craft fairs, and other public convocations in which



Untitled, 2010, Collage on paper, Paper: 18.75 x 12.5 inches each

hundreds of participants are encouraged to “take history into their own hands.” Her series of events called *The Muster* was inspired by American Civil War battle reenactments and was organized around the question, *What are you fighting for?* In her project called *Notion Nanny*, she took on the role of an itinerant apprentice, learning traditional skills, from blacksmithing to lace-making, and tracing the Arts & Crafts Movement from its origins in England’s Lake District all the way to the Bay Area, culminating in a *MATRIX* Series exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum in 2007.

Smith has exhibited her work widely in the U.S. and abroad. In 2008, she joined the Sculpture and Graduate Fine Arts faculty at California College of the Arts. Last year she was named one of the top San Francisco Artadia Award winners, and received an Alternative Exposure grant from Southern Exposure, a Headlands Center for the Arts residency, and most recently, a Creative Work Fund grant. She is currently working on a publication to document a yearlong project with SFMOMA, as well as upcoming shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver and Southern Exposure, both opening in the spring of 2011. This is her first exhibition at Haines Gallery.
IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST