

DEREK ELLER GALLERY

For Immediate Release:

Jessica Jackson Hutchins

The Exponent of Earth (You Make Me_)

May 15 - July 3, 2008

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 15, 6 - 8 pm

In her third solo show at the gallery, Jessica Jackson Hutchins uses video, sculptural assemblage and ceramics to explore intimacy, compassion, and human frailty. The title of the exhibition is taken from two disparate sources reflecting some of the values in her work: the personal and the punk. "The Exponent of Earth," is the last line from an Emily Dickinson poem circa 1864 that was also part of Hutchins' wedding vows, while "You Make Me," was famously written on the chest of Richard Hell on the cover of his 1970s punk album, "Blank Generation."

In two sculptural works, an armchair and a loveseat with plaster forms suggest a mother's body or a domestic landscape. They cradle handmade functional ceramics, as if offering the possibility of intimate exchanges. In another, a rocking horse seems to run endlessly on a piece of glitter-strewn astro-turf, a remnant from her daughter's birthday party, suggesting the monotony and extravagant beauty of childhood and suburbia.

Like her sculptural works, the video *Sun Valley Road Trip* embodies a sense of both the monumental and the intimate and personal. Consisting of 40 minutes of virtually unedited footage of a family road trip from Idaho to Oregon in 2006, it depicts the monotony and overwhelming emotion and frenetic energy of family. Like many of Hutchins' videos, it is both a formal composition and a casual document of family life (the home movie). Time is revealed as something geologic and sublime but also concrete in the eyes of Hutchins' toddler.

Also on view will be a bronze sculpture and a series of relic like objects on ceramic pedestals that personify the frailty of the world in both appearance and in the underlying process. For example, the work *Iranian World 12th Century Ewer - Into the Present* was originally a paper and wire sculpture inspired by a piece of Islamic pottery. After being covered in clay, the object was placed in a kiln, where the paper and wire were burned away, leaving their imprint in the texture of the finished ceramic as cracks and fissures. What could be seen as flaws become integral to the final work, and celebrated for their own aesthetic beauty. The work entitled *Accidents in Bronze* is actually a bronze cast taken from a similarly created ceramic sculpture that had subsequently sustained two unintended breakages. The final bronze statue serves as a memorial to the imperfect but essential journey by which it came into being. As with *Iranian World 12th Century Ewer - Into the Present*, the artist sutures the flawed force of ancient history to her own.

Jessica Jackson Hutchins lives and works in Portland, Oregon. Her work has been shown throughout the United States and Europe. In January 2009, her work can be seen in the exhibition *Dirt on Delight: impulses that form clay*, at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia. Recent exhibitions have included *Stylite Optimism* at Reed College in Portland, OR, *Place of the Transcommon* at INOVA/Vogel - University of Wisconsin, and *Gone Formalism* at the ICA of the University of Pennsylvania.

Derek Eller Gallery is located at 615 West 27th Street, between 11th and 12th Avenues. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 11am - 6pm. For further information or visuals, please contact the gallery at 212.206.6411 or visit www.derekeller.com.