

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Lucy Puls

Here Everywhere

Selected Works: 1989–2003

April 11 – May 18, 2024

Opening reception Thursday, April 11, 6–8 PM

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Here Everywhere*, a solo exhibition with Bay Area artist Lucy Puls, her second at the gallery. Showcasing selected works from 1989 to 2003, *Here Everywhere* highlights Puls' unique and overlooked approach to materials and form, surveying her early experiments in making sculpture with found objects, wax, and resin.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Puls turned to making small, resin-cast sculpture with personal effects, found objects, and outmoded household items. At the time, Puls had been making large-scale fiberglass and corrugated metal sculpture; as a reprieve from this labor-intensive work, she began to experiment with leftover waxes and resins on more intimately sized works using items that were on hand in the studio or discovered during thrift shop runs.

Here Everywhere presents selected artworks made across almost fifteen years, loosely arranged into three categories that broadly describe their materials: *Small Things*, *In Resin*, and *Of Book*.

Comprising *Small Things* is an example of one of Puls' very first experiments in wax from 1989, *Dicis Causa (For the Sake of Appearances)*. Puls coated a fur hat in a mixture of wax and resin, tipping the form on its edge and affixing insects to its interior surface. Once a status symbol, here the fur hat transforms from a useable object to relic, recognizable, yet made distant through the artist's material interventions and presentation on a steel shelf.

Works from *In Resin* include heavily sanded, amberized sculptures arranged throughout the gallery at varying heights atop artist-made shelves and pedestals. Assembled in this series are objects that made their way into thrift stores en masse throughout the 1990s, including once sought-after goods such as the Macintosh 512K and My Little Pony toys. Puls primarily acquired items that had been marked down at resale stores, thus seeking to understand the ways our consumer tendencies pave the way for trend cycles and widespread obsolescence. Children's toys, in particular, mark this system for the artist; *Res Parvus (Little Things)* (1991) and *Pueri Arma (Child's Gun)* (1991) reveal assembled compositions of the consumer objects that denote childhood—from the innocence and ubiquity of small, plastic figurines to the targeted marketing of BB guns to young boys.

Made a decade later, *Imperfectus (Encyclopedia Britannica)* (2002) and *Involvo (Websters Twentieth Century, Red)* (2002) from the series *Of Book* were created in a time-intensive process of gluing and layering. Unbinding and re-articulating the ideologic form of the encyclopedia, Puls meticulously transformed thousands of loose pages into solid, illegible objects.

The goal across all three series, Puls says, was to achieve in sculpture that which is done with relative ease in painting and drawing: to reduce “representation” to its simplest means while physically separating the object, or artwork, from real-time reality. This is to suggest the idea of a physical object that is both there and not there, devoid of any use-value yet rife with manifold meanings and associations. Through a “strangely alluring sense of loss,” as Glen Helfand described of the work in 2005, Puls turns Dada and Minimalist principles inside out, asking us to more deeply consider the influence of everyday objects and the way they reflect essential ideas of who we are.

Lucy Puls (b. 1955, lives and works in Berkeley, CA) received her MFA from Rhode Island School of Design in 1980. She has had solo exhibitions at Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York; P. Bibeau, Brooklyn, NY; Verge Center for the Arts, Sacramento, CA; Stephen Wirtz Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Memorial Union Gallery at University of California, Davis, CA; and Asheville Art Museum, Asheville,

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NC, among others. Group exhibitions include BAMPFA, Berkeley, CA; Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco, CA; Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA; SculptureCenter, Queens, NY; and DiverseWorks, Houston, TX, among many others.

Her work can be found in numerous public collections, including SFMoMA, San Francisco, CA; Oakland Museum of California, Oakland, CA; BAMPFA, Berkeley, CA; Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA; Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, HI; Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, CA and the Jewish Museum, New York, NY. Puls is Professor Emeritus of Art at the University of California, Davis.