

SMALL A PROJECTS

261 Broome Street
New York, NY 10002

www.smallaprojects.com

P 212.274.0761
F 212.274.0756

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anissa Mack

Your Past A Star

May 29 – July 29, 2009 (EXTENDED!)

Small A Projects is pleased to present *Your Past A Star*, our second exhibition with Anissa Mack, and her first in our New York gallery.

Mack is a sculptor whose objects and performances engage the mysterious and dubious propositions of history, myth-making and artifacts. In this exhibition, objects informed by craft, appropriation, and wry substitutions present history and memory as an ambiguous territory where meaning and significance flow in multiple directions. Chronology and distinctions of cultural hierarchy are upstaged by imagination and formal ingenuity in these works that include two text-based pieces, a large denim quilt, freestanding sculptures and a series of framed collages. Mack's aesthetic cues draw from disparate strategies of display, and the works in this exhibition find kinship with a variety of artifacts including Ancient Egyptian statuary, Sol Lewitt's obliques, Bushwick street fashion, and folksy Americana.

In subtle and canny ways, Mack's work points indirectly to truisms of art-making; that one is defined as an artist by what one makes, but also by what one's work engenders, and that posthumous influence may be of greater consequence than one's inheritance. However, legacy and inheritance are not binary positions for Mack. Instead, her projects of observation, alteration and re-making suggest the ways that time periods and cultural aesthetics overlap and meld.

In *Gemini I* and *Gemini II*, fluted and gilded mannequins don pairs of painted-on jeans. In these sculptures, two highly stylized and clichéd tropes of feminine beauty are drawn from the chronological poles of known civilization, yet what becomes shared territory is the possibly universal appreciation of a full and round female derriere. In *Broken Star*, a traditional whole cloth quilt pattern is expressed in denim and further distorted so that it resembles the opening text in *Star Wars*. In this work too, forms and materials collide in ways that signify in unexpected directions, and the final work might point toward Richard Tuttle or Sol Lewitt, but also early American craft and Levi's.

Objects in Mack's work are doubled, remade or redoubled and earlier pieces are "covered" to make new works. This is most conspicuous in the Durham Fair project where in 1996, Mack entered every category (nearly 70) at a craft fair in her hometown in Connecticut, later exhibiting the work in a gallery with her earned ribbons. In 2006, Mack made a 10th anniversary version of her own work, again entering the fair and later exhibiting the piece in the gallery. Mack is also known for her public performances where she reframes a cultural ritual, testing the boundaries of semiotics and superstition. What becomes important in these works is the reformatting and visual assessment of an idea, or the formal shift and distortion from one iteration to the next.

Anissa Mack lives and works in New York. In the past two years Mack has had solo exhibitions at the Santa Barbara Contemporary Art Center, The Atlanta Contemporary Art Center and Small A Projects, Portland. Her work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions at museums including PS1 Contemporary Art Center, the Queens Museum of Art and the Bass Museum of Art, Miami. She has also been commissioned to create public projects for the Public Art Fund and Wave Hill.

The Gallery is open from noon–six, Wednesday through Sunday. Please email the gallery for more information or visuals.

Please note: the gallery's summer hours will begin after the July 4th holiday. Please check the website for details.