Tom Nussbaum: Recent Constructions

Octavia Art Gallery | Houston

July 14 – August 31, 2018

Octavia Art Gallery is pleased to present *Tom Nussbaum: Recent Constructions*. Included in this exhibition are Nussbaum’s jovial sculptures, mobiles, paintings, prints, and installations.

Tom Nussbaum works from his studios in East Orange, NJ and Burlington Flats, NY. His intuitive and colorful sculptures are created out of welded steel and paint. They reference vessels and baskets, the architectural frameworks of buildings and towers, and the human figure. His paintings and prints reflect the three-dimensional works in terms of color and the freedom that they convey. Nussbaum’s current body of work is an exploration of connections between the human figure and forms found in nature, art, architecture, and technology. Many of these works also reflect his life-long interest in creative practices found outside of the main-stream art world, such as folk art, sign painting, quilt making, indigenous architecture, and hand-made objects from around the world.

*Tom Nussbaum: Recent Constructions* includes several free-standing sculptures that are delicate in appearance, but constructed of sturdy welded steel rods and wire. These artworks are rooted in a methodological approach to architecture and objects, as exemplified in both *Watership*and *Don Quixote*. Using the same techniques, Nussbaum also creates relief paintings that hang slightly off the wall, each casting its own unique galaxy of shadows. His work is also informed by the history of abstract art in both painting and sculpture, and a formal exploration of color and form, as seen in the large wall work *East Orange Boogie Woogie,*which directly references the 1943 Piet Mondrian painting *Broadway Boogie Woogie.*The centerpiece of the exhibit is Nussbaum’s 34’ long wall installation *Step Right Up.*Built especially for this exhibition, this exuberant and expansive wall relief brings together many of the themes running throughout the show.

Tom Nussbaum has been a visiting artist and lecturer at the University of Minnesota, Montclair State University, and Rowan University, NJ. He has served on award juries for the Sculpture Space residency program, NY; the Scholastic Art Awards, NY, and for both the New Jersey and Pennsylvania State Arts grant programs. He was awarded two New Jersey State Individual Artist Fellowships and has been a three time MacDowell Colony Fellow. Nussbaum’s work has been exhibited throughout the United States and internationally; he has completed over thirty site-specific public works in plazas, train stations, schools, hospitals, libraries, environmental centers, and playgrounds. Nussbaum’s work is found in several public and private collections including the Montclair Museum of Art, NJ; Princeton Public Library, NJ; New Jersey Transit, NJ; Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centers, NJ; Chase Manhattan Bank, NY; Hasbro Inc., RI, among others.