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DOMESTIC ODYSSEY



David Pace, *Fiestaware*, 1995. 9 color photographs displayed in grid; 60x48 in. (total); courtesy the artist.



Yoram Wolberger, *Refrigerator*, 2001, 72"x48"x48"; Steel, aluminum, electric

Saturday, March 6, 2004 through Saturday, July 3, 2004

The San Jose Museum of Art presents *Domestic Odyssey*, an exhibition that features work by national and international artists who use household items — appliances and furniture — as touchstones for their work. In this exhibition, everyday objects are transformed into seductive, whimsical, and thought-provoking meditations on cultural, social, and autobiographical issues.

A major focal point of *Domestic Odyssey* is Liza Lou's contemporary masterpiece, *Kitchen* (1991-95), where Lou has taken a typical suburban kitchen and transformed it into something magical, while also exploring issues of commodified culture and the value of housework. Inspired by Italian mosaics, Lou — a recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" award — spent five years creating *Kitchen*, her first major work. The installation is a three-dimensional, 168-square-foot detailed life-size replica of a 1950s kitchen that Lou covered with 20 million brightly-colored beads; it includes an intricate tile counter and dish-filled sink, a cherry pie cooling on an oven rack, and a table set for breakfast, complete with a box of Captain Crunch®. The life-scale room is an astounding, yet poignant environment, vacant of human presence. **This is the first time *Kitchen* has been exhibited in Northern California.**

Running through July 3, the exhibition features: Marlene Alt, Margarita Cabrera, Helen Cohen,

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[Domestic Odyssey. \\$9.95 at sjma.com \(\\$8.95 for SJMA members\)](#)

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wires, treon, ice. Courtesy of the artist and Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco, CA.



Shadi Ghadirian, *Like Everyday (Mesle Harooz)*, 2001; 10 color photos, 20x20 inches (each), Collection of the Iranian Art Foundation, New York.



Liza Lou, *Kitchen*, 1991-1995, Mixed-media bead installation, 8 x 11 x 14 feet; Collections of Eileen Harris-Norton and Peter Norton, Santa Monica.



Yoram Wolberger, *Coffee Table*, 2001. Wood, wood products, embedded leather; approx. 50x30 in.; Courtesy of the artist and Catharine Clark Gallery.

Willie Cole, Carlee Fernandez, Tiffany Forner, Megan Foster, Shadi Ghadirian, Brian Goggin, Mona Hatoum, Tulsa Kinney, Stephen Litchfield, An Te Liu, Liza Lou, Tony May, David Pace, Allen Topolski, and Yoram Wolberger, and includes recent installation, video, photography, painting, sculpture, assemblage, and prints.

Curated by SJMA Senior Curator JoAnne Northrup, *Domestic Odyssey* demonstrates how otherwise ordinary items can be elevated or changed into artworks of significant emotional and artistic resonance. She states, "These articles of daily life become surrogates for our own thoughts, fears, dreams, and desires, providing a fertile environment for gaining insight into the places we live, physically and emotionally. In a time of increasing strife in the world, it is revealing to note that artists have turned their attention to a more personal sphere — only to find that the trappings of domesticity can take on the worldly issues of the day."

Artists in *Domestic Odyssey* create works that use metaphors of domesticity to explore issues of gender, class, and culture. Israeli-American sculptor Yoram Wolberger's sculptures are marvels of creative destruction, as seen in *Refrigerator* (2001), which, after being sawed apart at ½ inch intervals like a loaf of sandwich bread, has lost all functionality — yet still hums along, accumulating frost. Carlee Fernandez creates sculptures that according to one critic "amalgamate found trophy animals with ordinary household products and utensils." The resulting hybrids satirize society's use of animals as servants of mankind, causing us to question the treatment of the "lower species." Taking a more lyrical approach, Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum's delicate installation *First Step* (1996) combines an antique Shaker crib with a dusting of powdered sugar. The crib appears to have become animated and moved away from its sugar "shadow." Bay area artist Tony May's impeccably finished, small-scale paintings convey a wry sense of humor, taking as their subject

the artist and Catherine Clark Gallery,
San Francisco, CA.



Margarita Cabrera, *Cleaning Supplies*,
2003. Vinyl, thread, metal. Courtesy of
the artist and Sara Meltzer Gallery, New
York, NY.



Mona Hatoum, *First Step*, 1996. Found
Shaker crib and powdered sugar;
40x36x36 in; collection of Penny Cooper
and Rena Rosenwasser.



Carlee Fernandez, *Hugo Parlier* from

matter minor home improvements
such as repaired cooking pot lids and
handles, touching on issues of
gender roles within the home. Iranian
artist Shadi Ghadirian's 2001 series
Like Everyday (Mesle Harrooz)
consists of ten color photographs
that incorporate common household
objects in unorthodox ways and are
designed to challenge the viewer's
perception of Moslem women in
contemporary Eastern societies.

Domestic Odyssey examines the
minds and expressive capabilities of
artists that have discovered the
potency of transforming daily ritual
and acts of domesticity into realms
of personal narrative that override
their original intent.

Major sponsorship of *Domestic
Odyssey* is provided by The Mercury
News.

Additional support is provided by
Aspect Communications and Vintage
Wine Merchants.

The San Jose Museum of Art and
this exhibition are supported by the
City of San Jose; the National
Endowment of the Arts; The
California Arts Council; the William
Randolph Hearst Education
Endowment; The David and Lucile
Packard Foundation; the Koret
Foundation, and Museum Members.

Catering for the *Domestic Odyssey*
opening night party was provided by
Parsley Sage Rosemary & Thyme.
In-kind contribution by Gordon
Biersch Brewing Co and Cabaret
Chocolates.

the series *Friends*, 2001. Taxidermic animal, synthetic material; 72 x 20 x 35 in. Lent by Richard and Carolle Sands.



Willie Cole, *Made in the Philippines II*, 1993. Shoes, PVC pipe, and wood; 42x45x39 in. Collections of Eileen Harris-Norton and Peter Norton, Santa Monica.



Marlene Alt, *Still Waters*, 2002. Mixed media sculpture; video projection on metal bed. Courtesy of the artist.



Stephen Litchfield, *Revised Standard Version #62*, 2001. Altered chair, new uphol.; 33x11x7 in. Courtesy of the artist and John Elder Gallery, New York, NY



Carlee Fernandez, *Friends (advertisement)*, 2001.

