

## ARTIST STATEMENT BARI ZIPERSTEIN

My artistic practice is engaged with the architectural history of Los Angeles and the effect of consumerism on urban landscapes. I have produced site-specific sculptures, installations, collages, and photographs that examine and deconstruct the relationship between spaces and the consumables that occupy and adorn them.

Many of the sculptures reflect an interest in three types of materials: architectural beams and columns that serve as the building blocks of modern architecture; objects of modern commerce which are partially consumed and abandoned and the various packages and containers used to store consumer goods.

Standardized storage dimensions delimited my early work. I placed cardboard boxes in serial arrangements that highlighted their modular utility. The configuration was designed to maximize space, but at the same time question the need for spatial order and the demand for storage, itself. Each box was meticulously tagged, catalogued and inventoried prior to its placement. The boxes were later reconstructed and rearranged, including as tightly ordered collapsed stacks of raw material sandwiched between pallets; and as ephemeral architecture, leaned against the gallery wall and coated with bands of neon paint, a metaphor on how color is used in product design to allure consumers.

My current work continues this investigation of America's consumer society and its material surplus and waste. Over the past year, I have created a series of small collages that deconstruct idealized domestic scenes that were culled from home décor magazines from the 1950s thru the present, including the popular commercial publications *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Architectural Digest*. I transform posh interiors into absurd but highly structured environments by laying in paper cut-outs of stark white architectural beams that protrude, contort and escape out of everyday functional objects, such as chairs, tables, chandeliers and dish ware. These works on paper function as studies for sculptural interventions on a grand scale.

I am especially interested in the way material things reflect socioeconomic strata. For example, I have built minimal, geometric sculptures around outmoded lamps, mass-produced wine racks, kitschy figurines, and ornate picture frames from thrift stores specifically because they were designed to be cheaply purchased and quickly discarded, for the ultimate and continual profit of their distributors. Consumers have attached or declared no value - sentimental or economic - onto such products, yet they create a constant demand for new production. By shopping for cast-off and resale goods as sculptural material, I am hyper aware of, but only nominally participate in, the marketplace.

For my last project, I realized the collages in three-dimensional space of an actual domestic setting, my Spanish style apartment built in Los Angeles in the 1920s. Over fifty site-specific sculptures, made of foam core and plaster, mutated out of decorative and functional objects, rendering their temporary environment overgrown, monumental, illusory and artificial. I lived among the sculptures for three months and literally negotiated the space in awkward and precarious ways on a daily basis.

Because the sculptures were temporary and site-specific, they were documented in large format color photographs. The photographs replicated the quality of a high-end magazine spread because the work was a comment on the utopian lifestyles proffered by home décor magazines. The photographs illustrated decoration consumed by architectural outgrowths—an interior design gone very much awry. These absurd structures, which lacked function and sustainability, were a direct response to consumer excess in America.