Cynthia Minet: Jacked

September 29, 2019 – January 5, 2020

LOS ANGELES – Craft Contemporary presents Cynthia Minet: Jacked, a new site-specific installation by Los Angeles-based sculptor Cynthia Minet, on view from September 29, 2019 to January 5, 2020. Informed by a long-standing interest in ecological issues, Minet’s sculptures—featuring her signature use of plastic materials—address the complicated roles of plastic, consumer culture, and electricity in modern life. Cynthia Minet: Jacked traces the specific cultural and geological history of Miracle Mile through the development of petroleum to plastic and draws attention to their impact upon the present-day environment.

One-part animal, one-part machine, the installation features a motorized, brightly illuminated sculpture titled Jacked: Panthera Atrox, 2019 that combines the form of the panthera leo atrox — an extinct North American lion whose remains have been excavated from the La Brea Tar Pits—with the mechanisms of a modern-day oil pump jack. This animal-machine-hybrid is made of wood, metal, and discarded post-consumer plastics found mostly in domestic settings, such as detergent bottles, large liquid containers, children’s furniture, and old toy parts. By using post-consumer plastics as her source material, Minet illustrates the entire sequence of petroleum from its discovery to its plastic derivative, thus referencing the history of mining natural resources from sites such as the La Brea Tar Pits.

“Minet’s playful use of plastic as a colorful, exuberant material offers a nuanced vision of our complicated relationship with plastic: Jacked: Panthera Atrox is at once inviting, with its glowing LED lights and moving parts, and at the same time an explicit display of the damage caused by human impact on the environment. The sculpture echoes the dual nature of plastic: it is both a substance that we depend on, ubiquitous thanks to
its convenience and malleability, yet ultimately unsustainable and even destructive,” comments Exhibitions Curator Holly Jerger.

In addition to *Jacked: Panthera Atrox*, Minet also presents a number of smaller works, titled Disappearing series, which point out the ways in which environmental damage also affects animal populations. Each one of these works is composed of a 3D printed animal skull resting atop a lit surface, with projected fragments of the poem “The Animals are Leaving,” written by Charles Harper Webb. The 3D files of the skulls are sourced from the archives of the Smithsonian Institution, which has documented species undergoing various states of extinction. As time passes, the words of the poem slowly fade away, leaving a ghostly imprint behind, paralleling the gradual disappearance of life forms around the world.

Director Suzanne Isken summarizes, “Cynthia’s dazzling installation speaks to the ways in which humans have shaped the world around themselves, highlighting the unintended consequences of consumption whether on animal life, the environment, or society itself.” Indeed, human activity has impacted the planet to such an extent that an entirely new geological era has been defined – the anthropocene – to describe the totality of its effects on a global scale. With the mounting presence of the anthropocene on modern life, Cynthia Minet’s work is timely in not only critiquing consumer society but also, perhaps more effectively, presenting us with our own consumption.

*Cynthia Minet: Jacked* is realized in collaboration with Mike Roof, mechanics consultant, and Vaughn Hannon, lighting consultant. Mike Roof is an artist and a synthetic chemist. Vaughn Hannon is an LED systems designer working at the intersection of art and technology; Minet and Hannon have previously collaborated in 2017 on Minet’s solo museum exhibition, *Migrations*, at the Museum of Art and Science in McAllen, Texas.

Cynthia Minet holds an M.F.A. in Sculpture from San Francisco State University, and a B.A. from UC Santa Barbara. Currently a professor at Moorpark College in Southern California, she has also taught in Rome, Italy and in Guadalajara, Mexico. Her past exhibitions include solo presentations at the Museum of Art and Science in McAllen, Texas; *CURRENT: LA Water Biennial* in Los Angeles, California; the Valley Performing Arts Center Gallery at California State University, Northridge; the USC Fisher Museum of Art at the University of Southern California; Los Angeles International Airport; and the Culver Center for the Arts, University of California, Riverside.

OPENING
An opening reception for *Cynthia Minet: Jacked* will take place on Saturday, September 28, 2019 from 6 – 9 PM.
Located on Los Angeles’ historic Miracle Mile since 1965, Craft Contemporary reveals the potential of craft to educate, captivate, provoke, and empower. With a focus on contemporary art made from craft media and processes, Craft Contemporary presents dynamic exhibitions by established and emerging artists and designers who are often underrepresented in larger art institutions. Through a robust roster of regular programs and events, Craft Contemporary offers creative opportunities for the public to participate in hands-on workshops led by professional artists. Craft Contemporary cultivates an environment for people in Los Angeles to deepen their relationship to art, creativity, and one another. For more information, visit www.cafam.org

LOCATION: 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036
ADMISSION: FREE every Sunday
REGULARLY: $9 for adults; $7 for students, teachers, seniors; free for Craft Contemporary members
HOURS: Tuesday – Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; closed Mondays. Every first Thursday of the month, extended hours 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

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PROGRAMS

**A Recycled Plastic and Found Object Sculpture Workshop with Cynthia Minet**

Saturday, October 19 | 1 – 4 PM

$40 / $30 members

Join us for a found object and assemblage workshop led by artist Cynthia Minet. Participants are invited to collect and bring a variety of plastics used in their everyday lives and transform them into creatures and sculptures.