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For Immediate Release

Hilary Harnischfeger
May 9 - June 21, 2009
Opening Reception: Saturday, May 9, 6-8 PM

Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present a show of new works by Hilary Harnischfeger. In the gallery, Harnischfeger will exhibit abstractions on paper that are equal parts drawings, paintings, and bas-reliefs. These pieces' three-dimensional impulse is explored further in several small-scale, cast plaster and paper sculptures, also on view. Hovering between the beautiful and the homely, the formal and the corporeal, the mythical and the awkward, Harnischfeger's pieces evoke mysterious, silent fossils, dug up and reanimated via the artist's hand.

Made of layers of paper dipped in water and ink, chunks of plaster, glass and crystal shards and pieces of rock and quartz, Harnischfeger's wall works bristle with the taut energy borne of multiple materials situated over and against each other: built up, carved into and painted over. Drawing on varied influences, from Byzantine icons and Japanese Kenzan earthenware to Arthur Dove's abstracted landscapes to Morandi's still lifes, Harnischfeger's wall pieces are considered but also physically immediate. They bear the marks of their maker's careful process, while acquiring an anthropomorphic, sensual force all their own.

Harnischfeger's sensibility is emphasized in her sculptures. More directly expressive than the wall works, the plaster in these objects appears slapdash, cast into gawky, slumpy, engaging poses. A closer look at their surface, however – at the interplay between rough and smooth, at the sometimes faded, sometimes vibrant color spectrum, at the nooks and bumps formed by layers of inked paper and embedded and picked away pieces – reveals the artist's interest in the tension between control and release. For Harnischfeger, happenstance will forever be curbed by intention, while intention will forever be foiled by material eccentricity.

Hilary Harnischfeger had her first New York solo show at Never Work gallery in 2008. She has participated in several group shows, among them shows at Elizabeth Dee gallery, New York, Southfirst gallery, Brooklyn, Ballroom Marfa, Texas, Artists Space, New York, and Grimm Fine Art, Amsterdam. She received her MFA from Columbia University. She lives and works in Brooklyn.

Rachel Uffner Gallery represents the artists Josh Blackwell, Barb Choit, Hilary Harnischfeger, Pam Lins, Sara Greenberger Rafferty, and Roger White. Please call 212-274-0064 or email info@racheluffnergallery.com for more information.

Image: *Untitled*, 2009, turquoise, paper, ink, plaster, 13 x 10 x 2.5 inches

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