

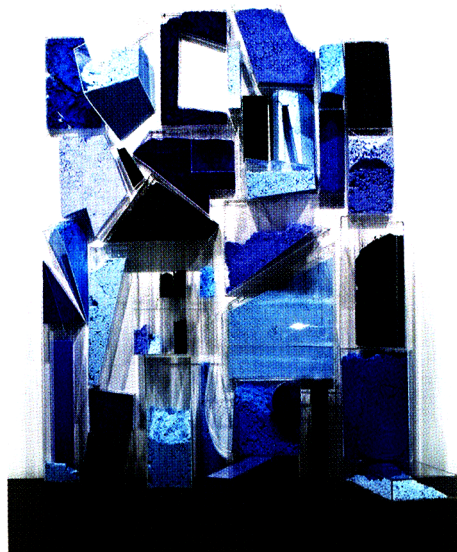
LOS ANGELES

Rachel Lachowicz
at Shoshana Wayne Gallery

Placed across the room from each other and functioning like book ends for this exhibition are two large sculptures: one made from hand-cut empty cardboard boxes, the other filled Plexiglas containers. *Cell: Interlocking Construction* is comprised of clear acrylic boxes many partially filled with different tones of blue powder—a mixture of pigment and cosmetic compound. The form of the work derives from Kurt Schwitters' *The Merzbau*, created in 1933, and Lachowicz includes, albeit somewhat obscured, a mural-sized photograph of Schwitters' work in *Untitled 3d Sketch*, the

cardboard work that mirrors *Cell: Interlocking Construction*. These sculptures span the wall from floor to ceiling; besides sharing similarities with Schwitters, they also reference the work of Lee Bontecou and Louise Nevelson. These are quintessential Rachel Lachowicz sculptures: a recreation of a recognizable work created in a new medium. Lachowicz is interested in packaging, both the physical wrapper as in a container, and in how people—especially women and artists—are packaged. Well-known for making sculptures out of cosmetics—specifically lipstick and eye shadow—that feminized the hard-edged materials of minimalism, her sculptures continue to celebrate formalist issues.

Cell: Interlocking Construction, 2010, Rachel Lachowicz



"CELL: INTERLOCKING CONSTRUCTION," 2010

Rachel Lachowicz

PIGMENT, COSMETIC COMPOUND, PLEXIGLAS
APPROX. 144" X 125" X 53"

In her latest pieces, Lachowicz appropriates styles and genres rather than recreating specific works. For *Untitled (Homage to Mary Cassatt)*, she made a mold from the Styrofoam packaging that comes with electronic equipment, creating 72 castings from a mixture of wax and bergamot-scented pink soap. The bright pink units were stacked to create a cylindrical-shaped sculpture, in a nod both to minimalist form and to Mary Cassatt, a painter of intimate domestic scenes. In *Untitled (Box Under Construction with Liner)*, she stacked 48 metal shoeboxes to create a form that alludes to the works of Donald Judd and Carl Andre. Yet in a typical Lachowicz twist, she fills the boxes with tissue paper stamped with her signature. One of the boxes is partially open, creating a kink in the otherwise precise/minimal form. Working with eye shadow, she fabricates individual containers of compacted powder and pigment that are then assembled into large grids that evoke the works of the Light and Space artists. She also references artists who poured paint, like Morris Lewis, creating large panels with layers of dripping lipstick.

Because Lachowicz is first and foremost a sculptor, her works do not become mired in academic didacticism. They are carefully crafted and aesthetically pleasing, simultaneously celebrating the power of a feminine package while critiquing male hegemony in the art world.

—JODY ZELLEN