

Enzo - 1-888-AZHKQOL

August 14 - September 2, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, August 13, 6 - 10 pm

"The built-in failure of capitalism mirrors the planned obsolescence of the objects it produces."



Enzo's 1-888-AZHKQOL is a series of sculptures that explore capitalism's inherent threat to itself. The sculptures are inspired by improvised explosive devices (IEDs), used for guerrilla warfare. During the Iraq War, these types of handmade bombs were used against US-led invasion forces, often incorporating benign symbols of Western frivolity like Coke bottles, cigarette packs, water coolers, Blackberries, and pressure cookers. Today, ISIS propaganda videos embody a similar irony with anti-American executions styled like Hollywood blockbusters.

The formal qualities of the sculptures combine the language of bricolage with a contemporary wit that makes them read like designer bombs. Finished with a coat of velvety fibers, they appear simultaneously as retail products and artifacts excavated from the ground. The effect is a moral safety switch that underlines their paradoxical existence as works of art. They're intended to be detonated, but too precious to blow up.

The starting point for the sculptures was the fantasy of a bomb-maker as sculptor, painstakingly crafting each bomb as a work of art, and heartbroken each time one's destroyed. The works are Enzo's homage to the complex entanglement of creation and destruction, and the refuge offered by art.

By freezing these explosive devices in time, the works open a host of new questions. For example, a Coke bottle is meant to embody the notion of freedom. Enzo forces the viewer to confront it as potentially destructive, but in doing so also asks: was a Coke bottle ever innocent in the first place? The politics that fuel capitalism have not been without victims. Enzo activates these paradoxes to explore the contradictions of seduction, triggering internal conflict between attraction and rejection in the viewer.

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