

ART NEW ENGLAND

DECEMBER / JANUARY 2007

CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE



Dave Cole, *Trophy Wife No. 8*, mixed media, 2005

Judi Rotenberg Gallery/Boston, MA

www.judirotenberg.com

DAVID COLE'S TROPHIES AND MONUMENTS

David Cole's first solo exhibition has descended upon the Judi Rotenberg Gallery in the artist's usual guise of invention and wit. The twenty-seven-year-old artist, has wowed audiences everywhere with Jeff Koons-sized installations and hard-to-wrap-your-mind-around projects, à la Christo and Jeanne-Claude. Take his 22-foot acrylic felt flag that took two John Deere excavators to knit (the knitting needles were electric utility poles), or his lead bear that stands 14 feet high. While you won't find construction equipment at the Rotenberg Gallery, you will find plans and maquettes for *Cole & Hisler's Truck Mobile*, a massive mobile in its initial planning phases that will someday be suspended over the American landscape dangling life-size vintage trucks. Location: to be determined.

Back in the confines of the gallery, lacquered, antiquated dress forms adorned with antlers line the left wall of the gallery. These figurative sculptures, *Trophy Wives*, represent various ideal forms, affixed to the wall with heavy metal rods, then topped with antlers carefully chosen to match the silhouette.

Cole, however, can't keep away from the knitting needles for long. Patterned after a Vera Wang gown, hundreds of dollar bills have been cut apart then knit together to create a satirical prêt à porter dress that reads convincingly of fabric until the moment you catch a monetary whiff.

A decommissioned American flag torn apart at the seams then re-sewn, both celebratory and critical, is joined by a highly tactile acrylic flag thickened by toy soldiers strewn into the stars and stripes. His engaging, often puzzling work is notorious for attracting the errant touch of curious viewers; his larger-than-life lead bear eventually was encased in glass. At the Judi Rotenberg Gallery you can find a miniature knit bear but, before you are moved to touch it, remember: it's toxic. *D'lynne Plummer*