

COOPER
"Seven Years Bad Luck"

April 12th - May 5th , 2008

Opening Reception:
Saturday April 12th , 2008
7: 30 - 10:00pm

Fredric Snitzer Gallery
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Beginning April 12th 2008, Fredric Snitzer Gallery presents new work by COOPER in the trailer exhibition space located adjacent to the gallery. COOPER's new work includes drawings and sculpture constructed from a mixed-media pairing of found objects and hand-crafted components. COOPER returns with work that includes themes of nefarious outcome, human invention and the inherent waste that accompanies every device or substance man employs. The artist's format enjoys a revolting fusion of familiar objects and the formal liberties of making artwork at the end of the world.

"About a year ago I noticed COOPER's work had changed, most of the themes remained but the work itself had become barren, compliant, more approachable. But with this new work, it's evident the artist has gone back to make work in his old place, the confused angst of ugly teenagers and misfits, some stab at life's broken lessons and at all the mean things that happen when you're young or defenseless; to me, it looks like he slipped back a little too far, to that place before he made art, that place where the mind just wanders a bit, a little out of the functional or ordinary into thoughts below your surface, looking at the real things around us, common daily things, thinking down tangents and finding yourself in the dark surrounded by misunderstood and harrowing concepts, grotesque materials, man's cast offs, man's open pit mining, man's construction site dumpsters, man's shit.

I find my self looking at these oozing pieces, these heaps of found objects, old crap and synthetic garbage, wondering about when my sex gets on the carpet next to my bed, it dries out, all my tiny selves, half-lives wanting to happen, turning into clumped dust and then my wife vacuums it up in the perpetual cleaning cycles of any modern or ancient home, then I change the vacuum cleaner's bag, I throw it away, the garbage-man tosses it into a loud truck-machine that indifferently crushes it together with all of the neighbors refuse, grinding it into a massive trash mountain somewhere far from sight of this town. I see for a moment a scene in that documentary of those children in some foreign landscape digging through trash in search of anything edible, anything of value or use. Thousands of scavenging birds swirl above, every mountain of trash becomes a wet grayish-black twist of heaps and chunks that eventually squeeze out a rusty slick black oil, sometimes pooling in stray momentary ponds while searching for gravity to lead it back, back to where it all comes from, its me, that mountain is made up of me, my flesh's code, my ancestry, literally my life. Apparently you cannot destroy matter.

This new work is terrible, it brings no joy, it offers no beauty. Unless the truth of things truly is a constant beauty in all things, good or bad, perhaps good or evil; later I thought, perhaps I walked away from COOPER's show with inapplicable information, but I did sense I was now looking at old things I know differently. I suppose art can't really change or hurt you no matter how much contemporary artists try or dream that it should, but imagine living without it at all. Really picture that for a moment, no art at all, anywhere. No Rembrandts, no Rauschenbergs, no Beuys, no Chapman brothers, Weegee, David Lynch. I couldn't stand to be in a world without Goya or Burden's works."

Reprinted from Jack Sawhorse's Blog (February 20, 2008) jacksawhorseblog.com

