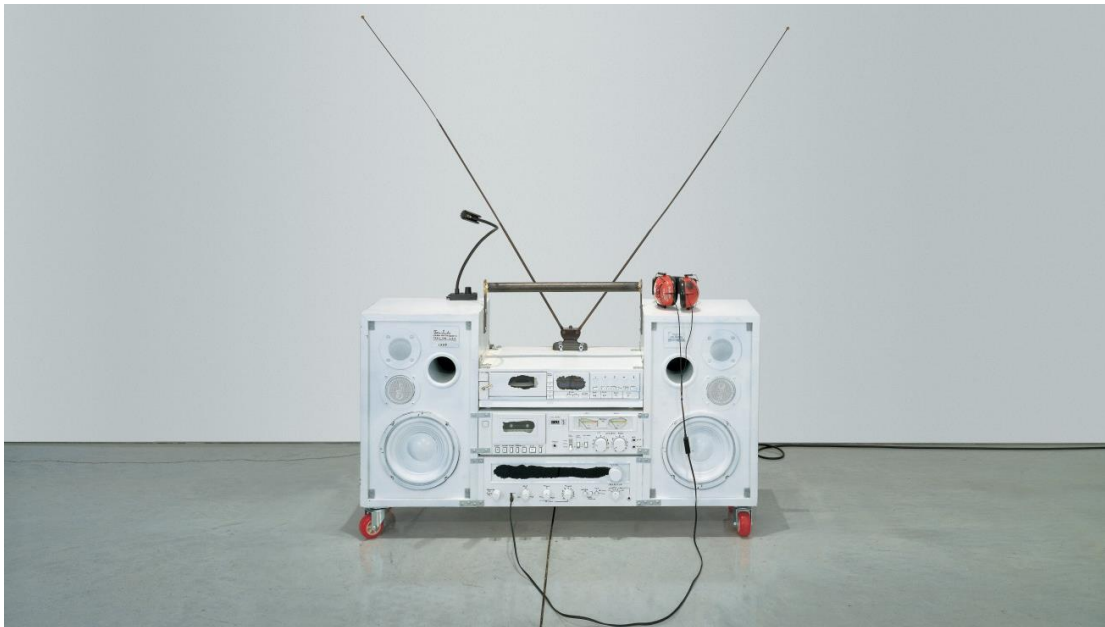


CONTACT: Nicole Chism Griffin, PR – The Contemporary Austin
ncgriffin@thecontemporaryaustin.org / 512 453 5312 x 119 (P) / 206 947 2312 (C)

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN PRESENTS FIRST EVER EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY TOM SACHS IN TEXAS



Tom Sachs: Boombox Retrospective 1999–2015
January 24 – April 19, 2015

Exhibition includes newly created, working ceramic boomboxes and will be joined by simultaneous exhibition BRAIN to HAND to OBJECT, featuring ceramic works by JJ PEET.

DECEMBER 2, 2014, Austin, Texas – From January 24 through April 19, The Contemporary Austin presents an immersive and interactive exhibition of assemblages, sculptures, objects, and audio installations by New York-based artist Tom Sachs. Titled *Boombox Retrospective 1999–2015*, the project demonstrates the artist’s unique, imaginative, and rigorous DIY aesthetic and is composed largely of works that riff on the idea of the “boombox,” the iconic emblem of 1980s hip-hop culture. A music lover and connoisseur himself, Sachs has recently constructed a series of ceramic boomboxes in a variety of sizes. As functional works of art, these boomboxes—along with other sculptures and installations on view in the exhibition—actually work and feature a collection of playlists contributed by pop icons and friends of the artist and curated by Sachs.

While Sachs's work has been exhibited worldwide and has garnered substantial critical recognition, this exhibition will be the first presentation of the artist's work in Texas. At The Contemporary Austin, Sachs has taken advantage of—even taken over—all three of the museum's sites: the Jones Center, the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria, and the Art School. A number of the ceramic boomboxes on view were created by the artist over the past year in the ceramics studios at the Art School, reflecting an exciting, first-ever collaboration between The Contemporary Austin's exhibitions program and Art School. The exhibition itself is on view at The Contemporary Austin – Jones Center, 700 Congress Avenue in downtown Austin, with additional works at the museum's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria, 3809 West 35th Street. In addition, Sachs has curated a concurrent exhibition of works by ceramics artist JJ PEET, on view in the Gate House Gallery at the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria. More information about both exhibitions can be found at www.thecontemporaryaustin.org.

"I have been making boomboxes since childhood," said Tom Sachs. "I hooked my Sony Walkman up to a set of mini speakers and velcroed them to a block of scrap plywood. It was a clusterfuck of wires. In 8th grade woodshop, I made a box for the whole mess out of pine. It had a knob to hang the headphones that was made out of a broomstick."

A relentlessly inventive sculptor, Tom Sachs and his studio are known for the fabrication of gadgets, hardware, and architectural constructions that have coalesced into playful and provocative objects and sculptural installations. Often incorporating, co-opting, and subverting corporate and cultural icons—from Tiffany & Co. and Chanel to Hello Kitty and McDonald's—Sachs pulls from his surroundings to find both inspiration for his works and the materials with which he constructs them, including plywood, foam core, batteries, duct tape, wires, hot glue, and solder, along with a disparate collection of mechanical detritus and other found objects. Most recently, his work has shifted to encompass more elaborate installations, as when he and his studio completely appropriated the idea of space exploration in *Space Program: Mars* (2012), a massive installation which transformed the New York Armory into a 55,000-square-foot demonstration of Sachs's warped vision of a mission to Mars—complete with his own imaginings of the equipment needed to live and work as part of such an mission and live performers who played the roles of scientists and explorers maneuvering within this imagined realm. As with his earlier sculptures and assemblages, the components of Sachs's worlds are created through a process the artist categorizes as *bricolage*, or the use of everyday objects and things found in one's direct surroundings to make art. The foundation of this handmade aesthetic, however, lies in the rigor and fastidiousness with which the artist and his high-functioning studio construct both the objects themselves and the conceptual and intellectual benchmarks that guide Sachs's life and practice. Sachs lives, manages his studio, and creates art with a playful subversion and punk-rock aesthetic married to a deep seriousness of intention and unwavering philosophy towards art and production.

"I have worked with Tom Sachs on several projects in the past, and I am very excited to introduce his work to Austin," said Louis Grachos, Ernest and Sarah Butler Executive Director of The Contemporary Austin. "Like Austin, Tom takes his eccentricities seriously. The maverick spirit of self-reliance and attention to hand-crafted precision that come through in his work will keenly resonate with our audiences in Central Texas and beyond."

At the Jones Center, the exhibition centers on Sachs's representations and re-creations of boomboxes. Ceramic boomboxes, many of which were created in The Contemporary Austin's Art

School studios, are joined by additional audio installations incorporating large-scale oratory speakers, cassette decks, and other outmoded listening devices and electronic components. Many of these will activate the gallery space through a scheduled series of eclectic sound experiences in the form of playlists produced by friends of the artist and local and national pop stars. Other objects on view include one of Sach's classic Hello Kitty sculptures, rendered in foam core, and an immersive bodega that invites unorthodox interactions between museum visitors, the work of art, and the museum space.

"The 15 sculptures in this exhibition represent a survey of boomboxes and sound systems that I've made since 1999," Sachs added. "The accompanying catalog attempts to include each one but so many have been lost over the years, the components recycled into newer better systems. Each stereo has always been in support of an activity, event or ritual. From dance party, to road trip, to poche vide (a place to empty your pockets as you enter your home), to laboratory, to bachelor pad, to iPhone dock, sound systems have always been a part of my work and will be as long as I continue to love music."

While many of the works on view illustrate the artist's deliberate use of everyday materials and objects, the newly created works on view in *Boombox Retrospective* demonstrate the artist's recent explorations of more durable media, including ceramics and bronze. At the museum's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria, large-scale bronze works will be on view, including *Miffy Fountain* (2008), a working fountain that coopts the beloved children's book character created by Dutch author and illustrator Dick Bruna; a new edition of Sachs's bronze interpretation of a Buddhist *Stupa* (2012), created specifically for this exhibition; and *Duralast* (2008), a Dadaist construction from the artist's series of "battery towers," comprising a stack of automobile batteries rendered in bronze. Subversiveness, irony, and tongue-in-cheek humor come through to some degree in each of these works and are amplified as the sculptures are situated in contrast to the formal grounds and historic Italianate villa of the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria.



TOM SACHS

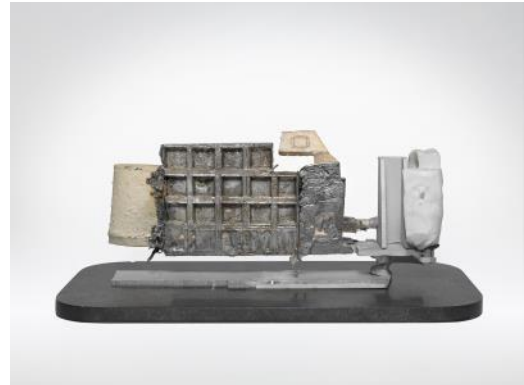
Tom Sachs (American, born 1966 in New York City, New York) currently lives and works in New York City. He studied at the Architectural Association in London in 1987 and received his BA from Bennington College in Bennington, Vermont, in 1989.

Sachs's recent solo exhibitions and projects include *American Handmade Paintings* at Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris (2014); *Space Program: Mars* at the Park Avenue Armory, New York City (2012); *Nautical Challenge and Other Voodoo* at the Baldwin Gallery, Aspen (2012); and *WORK* at Sperone Westwater, New York City (2011). In 2010, Sachs participated in the *Venice Architecture Biennale* and has since participated in the 2013 *Lyon Biennale*. Sachs was the recipient of the Aspen Award for Art in 2012.

The artist's work has been collected by numerous museums and is included in private and public collections worldwide, among them the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City; the Jewish Museum, New York City; the Citigroup Art Collection, New York City; the NASA Permanent Collection, Washington, D.C.; the Art Institute of Chicago; Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo; the Jumex Collection, Mexico City; and Fondazione Prada, Milan.

ALSO ON VIEW – JJ PEET: *BRAIN to HAND to OBJECT_*

In addition to his own works at the Jones Center and the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria, Tom Sachs has curated an exhibition of works by JJ PEET, who mentored Sachs as he learned ceramics and is the de facto leader of a four-person, off-kilter "ceramics circle" that meets weekly in New York City and includes Sachs in its ranks. After more than thirty years of experience working with clay, PEET has cultivated an extremely well-thought-out sensibility that combines a deliberately imperfect, handmade aesthetic with an intricate language of symbols and metaphors that reveal his personal philosophies. *BRAIN to HAND to OBJECT_* consists of a series of porcelain and mixed media objects that exploit notions of vision and time by contorting some objects—such as *GHOST_VIEWER* (2014), in which PEET modeled the form of a camera in porcelain clay only to decimate it by pouring molten lead into the casing—or by interrupting objects in often aggressive ways—such as *DECOY_Cup_6* (2014), a rough-hewn ceramic cup with a vitrified porcelain blade embedded in and protruding from its exterior wall. All of the seemingly simple forms on view belie complicated layers—both physical and philosophical—and further the artist's explorations of analog methods, coding, and symbols; his assault on materialism and the pervading class system; and his visceral love of materials process. Like Tom Sachs's ceramic pieces in *Boombbox Retrospective*, many of the sculptures in *BRAIN to HAND to OBJECT_* were created in the ceramics studios of The Contemporary Austin's Art School, representing the first such collaboration between the museum's exhibition programs and Art School.



EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

Tom Sachs: Boombbox Retrospective 1999–2015 is organized by Sean Ripple, Assistant Curator at The Contemporary Austin. Support for the exhibition comes from Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip Aarons, Hotel Saint Cecilia, Hotel San Jose, Jeffrey's, Nancy and Dr. Robert Magoon, The Moody Foundation, The Nightingale Code Foundation, John and Amy Phelan, and Vision Fund Leaders and Contributors.

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

The Contemporary Austin reflects the spectrum of contemporary art through exhibitions, commissions, education, and the collection. The museum has two distinct yet complementary locations, the Jones Center in downtown Austin at 700 Congress Avenue, and Laguna Gloria, a twelve-acre site on Lake Austin at 3809 W. 35th Street, which is home to the Driscoll Villa, the Art School, and the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria.

TRAVELING TO AUSTIN

While in Austin, museum guests are encouraged to dine at [Jeffrey's](#) and [Josephine House](#), official restaurants for *Tom Sachs: Boombox Retrospective 1999–2015*. [Hotel Saint Cecilia](#) and [Hotel San Jose](#) are the official Austin hotels for the exhibition. Visitors planning an extended visit to Texas are encouraged to explore sister properties in the state, including [Hotel Havana](#), on a quiet stretch of the River Walk in San Antonio, and [El Cosmico](#), an eighteen-acre nomadic hotel and campground in Marfa, Texas. More information about each of these properties can be found at www.bunkhousegroup.com.

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MORE INFORMATION about *Tom Sachs: Boombox Retrospective 1999-2015*

at <http://www.thecontemporaryaustin.org/exhibitions/tom-sachs>.

MORE INFORMATION about JJ PEET: *BRAIN to HAND to OBJECT_*

at <http://www.thecontemporaryaustin.org/exhibitions/jj-peet>.

IMAGE CREDITS:

Tom Sachs, *Model One*, 1999. Mixed media. 32 x 41 x 14 inches. Collection of Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip Aarons, New York. Image courtesy Tom Sachs Studio.

Tom Sachs, *Miffy Fountain*, 2008. Silicon bronze and paint (three-part catalyzed acrylic, white primer, white base coat, "Xtreme" Flat Finish Klearkote). 111 x 102 x 102 inches. Courtesy Tom Sachs Studio.

JJ PEET, *GHOST_VIEWER*, 2014. Porcelain, lead, aluminum, and granite. 4 1/4 x 12 x 5 inches. Courtesy the artist and On Stellar Rays. Photograph by Genevieve Hanson.