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For Immediate Release:

Jennifer Cohen and Vlatka Horvat

November 7- December 14, 2008

Opening Reception: Friday, November 7, 2008, 6-8 PM

Rachel Uffner Gallery is pleased to present a two-person exhibition of works by Jennifer Cohen and Vlatka Horvat. In the gallery, Cohen will exhibit several sculptures, while Horvat will present photographs and collages. Though operating in different media, both artists' work is concerned with the various limits placed on the human body, and how the aesthetic sphere can provide a point from which to explore the body's containment by – as well as potential release from – those limits.

Jennifer Cohen is interested in the ability of choreography to formalize the body's shape and movement. Drawing in her sculptures upon the precise gestural language of Broadway choreographer Bob Fosse as well as the neo-classical ballet of George Balanchine, Cohen, a former dancer, captures moments in which corporeal motion is made static, and presents the body, over and against its fragmentation and constraint, as fleetingly able to become more than what it is. Using materials such as wood, paper pulp, cement, clay, bronze and glitter fabric, as well as found objects like jazz shoes, Cohen's work suggests a meeting point between abstraction and representation, emphasizing the geometry of the body under the spell of choreography, and coupling the vocabulary of mid-century modernism with the half functional, half-magical vernacular of a performer's toolkit. The body's near alchemical transformation from one state to another is suggested by the works' very texture and physicality, impressed with the palpable mark of the artist's hand: Rounded cement "fingers" sport cast brass and bronze tips, and the lumpy gray "leg" emerging from its shoe is

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appealingly swan-like. In combining the luster of the precious with the rawness of the earthy, Cohen forms objects of awkward beauty.

In her photographs and collages, Vlatka Horvat focuses on the spectacle of the defamiliarized body, staging her own body in repeated transformations, reinventions, and pictorial erasures. Often done in a series, Horvat's work suggests an obsessive, never-resolved desire to distinguish the body from the environment it inhabits and decipher its place on the continuum between subject and object. This territory is mined in a series of photographs in which the artist conceals herself within ten different packages, from a cardboard box to aluminum foil to a vivid cloth sack. Invoking opposing notions of protection and vulnerability, mobility and constraint, the series' enigmatic tone provides no obvious solutions for an efficient unpacking. This inscrutability continues to be apparent in an unretouched photographic triptych, where the artist's body performs acrobatic feats of semi-disappearance behind a pillar in a room that she occupies. And in Horvat's collage work, odd, unrecognizable Dada-like creatures, remixed from a wealth of her existing photographic imagery, not only split the difference between animate and inanimate, but also narrow the gap between the subhuman and the superhuman. The jarring image of a partial feminine form tacked onto a bicycle wheel, a fire hydrant or a giant light bulb stresses the (female) body's predicament – its reduction, failure and oppression – but also the expansive imaginative possibilities its hybridity seems to provide.

Jennifer Cohen has exhibited her work at White Columns, NY, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Salzburg, Anton Kern Gallery, NY, and in Creative Time's Strange Powers, curated by Peter Eeley and Laura Hoptman. She received her MFA from Yale, and lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

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Vlatka Horvat's work has recently been exhibited at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, White Columns, NY, Anna Kustera Gallery, NY, Kunsthaus Graz, as well as in the festivals Home Works IV, Beirut and Art Sheffield 08. In 2009, her work will be shown at The Kitchen, NY, and at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. She was born in Čakovec, Croatia, and lives and works in New York, NY.

Rachel Uffner Gallery represents the artists Josh Blackwell, Barb Choit, Hilary Harnischfeger, Pam Lins, Sara Greenberger Rafferty, and Roger White. Please call 212-2740064 or email [info@racheluffnergallery.com](mailto:info@racheluffnergallery.com) for more information.

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