

RENA BRANSTEN GALLERY

77 GEARY ST.
SAN FRANCISCO
CALIFORNIA
94108

PRESS RELEASE

FRED WILSON

February 4 – March 31, 2012
Reception: Saturday, Feb. 4, 4 to 6pm

The Rena Bransten Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of works by **Fred Wilson**. Wilson, famous for mining museum collections to advance discussions or expose Eurocentric bias, makes work that raises questions and forces us to re-examine historical perspective.

Wilson re-assembles and re-frames objects to create new perspectives on meaning. Slavery, the African Diaspora, and racial inequality are referenced through his artwork and installations in thought provoking visual presentations that demand investigation.

The works included in this exhibition are selected for their ability to challenge our commonly held beliefs and invoke notions of race politics: blown black glass drips perhaps representing oil or tears evoking the plunder of natural resources; a set of 32 flags representing African countries or black independence movements stripped of their color and therefore identity and meaning; sculptures that use an assemblage of kitsch objects such as venetian slave candle holders and cookie jars in the shape of Moors dominated by a white plaster Venus figurine; a bust of Ota Benga, a pygmy exhibited in a cage at the Bronx Zoo in 1906.

Fred Wilson's work evokes strong reactions in all communities. Recently, the Central Indiana Community Foundation cancelled the public sculpture it had commissioned Wilson to create as too controversial. The sculpture, titled "E Pluribus Unum", would have isolated and enlarged an unknown African figure depicted in another of the city's public sculptures, the "Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument", but replaced the shackles he held aloft with a flag of the African Diaspora. Re-purposing public images to re-activate public discourse is Wilson's forte and the vital subtext in his work.

Fred Wilson was born in Bronx, NY in 1954 and currently lives and works in New York. He received a MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant in 1999. His work was included in the fiftieth Venice Biennale in 2003 and he was a recipient of the Larry Aldrich Foundation Award the same year.

Gallery hours are Tuesdays through Fridays 10:30 to 5:30 and Saturdays 11:00 to 5:00. For more information, please visit our web site, www.renabranstengallery.com.



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