

(November 4 – 23)

2— The Front Room

HANY ARMANIOUS



Hany Armanious takes on the role of artist, archeologist and alchemist. By digging through the refuse and cast-offs of contemporary society, he embarks on an excavation of the ritualistic origins of form making, while imbuing familiar objects with a profound archaic mysticism. Previous materials have included mud, bubbles, worms, sandpaper, manila folders, pool cues, and hot melt. Creating a magical bricolage of cast organic, found, and self-made objects, he explores the ambiguous distinction between the natural and the artificial. Disillusioned yet fascinated by the veneer of consumerism, Armanious pursues a “pure” state of materials, and finds sanctuary in the fundamental gestures and processes of the pre-industrial workshop.

For *The Front Room*, Armanious continues his experimentation with casting, both as a means of reproduction and as a process in its own right. His meticulous method denies the immediacy of the readymade, yet his choice of material provides visual proximity to the original forms. Polyurethane-cast tiles mark the space, which is presided over by the crumbling, prophetic obelisk. Despite its name, *The Oracle* disrupts our quest for meaning: at closer inspection, the inflatable toy bats are revealed as fragile glass vessels, and the soft, foamy floor tiles question the solidity of our foundations.

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Hany Armanious was born in Egypt in 1962, and he currently lives and works in Sydney, Australia. He has exhibited extensively throughout Australia and New Zealand, including City Gallery, Wellington; Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; and Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland. His work was been selected for the 1993 *Venice Biennale* and the 1995 *Johannesburg Biennale*. His first solo exhibition in the United States, *Selflok*, was held at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, in 2001. His most recent exhibition, *Year of the Pig Sty*, 2007, was held at Foxy Production, New York.

Image:

The Oracle, 2008

Cast polyurethane, blown glass,
and asphalt

Courtesy of the artist and
Foxy Production, New York

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