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Wade Schaming's Witty Towers

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Installation View: Perfect Tower, Brooch Tower, Remington Tower. Photo credit: Ken Shung

Wade Schaming's twenty giant towers turn his solo show at Residency 108 into a star turn. Located in Clermont, New York, It's five minutes from Bard but a bit off the beaten track for New York City residents. The exhibition, from January 18th through March 15th in the farm's studio and horse arena, juxtaposes geometric forms that otherwise function as furniture, farm equipment, hay, and utilitarian objects into "towers" with loaded titles. "As a kid playing with matchbox cars, I'd use random stuff in the house as buildings, and that's where it all started," Schaming tells me in his icebox-cold, 18 x 10-foot Greenpoint studio one winter morning.



Mother Mary Tower, 2014. Avon; Tupperware; found wood, plastic, paper, metal and glass. 83 x 33 x 30 IN.



Brooch Tower 2014 Found wood, metal & umbrella
All Photos: Wade Schaming

After his mother, a hoarder, died three years ago, Schaming began building towers with the houseful of Tupperware and stuff collected by his mother that his father sent in boxes from the

family home in Pittsburgh — home of the most famous hoarder of all time, Andy Warhol. To these, Schaming added discarded city objects. In his studio, *Mother Mary Tower*, *Cake Cake Cake Tower*, *Another Angel Tower*, and *Plunge Tower* are examples of this phase of his tower career. *Mother Mary Tower* is a series of brown, red, white, and seafoam green objects that variously frame a white Mary statue. The brown objects include a briefcase, coin collection boxes, and drinking jugs – all loaded symbols for Catholics. For Schaming, only Mary has meaning; the other things are rectangular and cylindrical volumes with straight and curving lines.

Schaming's work at Residency 108 is inventive in construction and range. *Pipe Dream Tower*, 72 x 38 x 32 inches, is a triangular corral of wooden horizontal slats fencing in a herd of black vertical pipe insulation. The contrast between lighter-hued flat horizontal lines and dark vertical tube shapes is as interesting as the title. *Upspout Tower*, 66 x 74 x 25 inches, shows a ladder top down but open, forming a sideways V as other wood and metal parts frame two white gutter spouts forming r-shaped white diagonal volumes on top. Other constructions feature white pool umbrellas, fencing, chairs, siding, fans; a cement mixer turns into a form for *Plantain Tower*. The *LeWitt + Flavin Tower* sports hay, metal, side tables, and long (unlit) fluorescent bulbs.



LeWitt + Flavin Tower 2014. Found metal, wood, hay, and fluorescent bulbs. 122 x 49 x 66 IN. Photo credit: Ken Shung

The artist told me his philosophy of art and some of the thinking behind his towers:

“I like buildings and skyscrapers. When I’m constructing them, I think of them as buildings and the elegance of the shape. For example, the rounded bottom of the plunger (in *Plunge Tower*) fits perfectly with the vase bottom, so I’m not thinking of a plunger.

“A lot of the ones upstate don’t have building-esque qualities, but I use the word ‘tower’ to suggest that each is a structure. I use the word ‘center’ to suggest headquarters of companies.

When I'm working with stuff, I'm immersed in brand names. In the country setting, I found hay, barn things, random metal pieces, and some waste from the house on the farm. By the third week, I was using anything I could pick up."

Thanks to Residency 108 and to a prior residency in Vermont, Schaming's assemblages seem to be moving in new directions. The 108 work seems both less complex and more striking than the Tupperware studio constructions, but all show unique approaches to geometric tower-like forms.

Residency 108 is in its first season and seems off to a good start thanks in part to the visuals it sent out and its website. The art is viewable by appointment and will have a closing day reception on March 15th. Some works are available for sale; please contact the Director, Jamie Morra director@residency108.org for further inquiries.

For more information: www.residency108.org and www.WadeSchaming.com



Intersection Tower, 2014 Found wood, metal, plastic with tape 93 x 83 x 93



Brugmansia Tower 2014 Found cement, metal, insulation and fluorescent bulbs 124 x 84 x 47

All photos: Wade Schaming

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