



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARTIST: Josephine Meckseper

TITLE: *Manhattan Oil Project*

PRESENTED BY: Art Production Fund

LOCATION: Times Square, The Last Lot, 46th Street & 8th Avenue

DATE: March 5th 2012 – May 6th 2012

SPONSOR: Sotheby's

Art Production Fund is pleased to present *Manhattan Oil Project* by Josephine Meckseper, the second installation at The Last Lot project space, on 46th Street and 8th Avenue in New York City. In *Manhattan Oil Project*, Meckseper will present two new monumental kinetic sculptures, each standing 25 feet tall. These full scale sculptures are inspired by mid 20th century oil pumps the artist discovered in Electra, a boarded-up town once famous for being the pump jack capital of Texas. Each sculpture is fully motorized to simulate the motions of a working oil pump. Placed in a vacant lot next to Times Square, the black and red steel structures slowly creak in the ceaseless oscillations of phantom oil excavation. The pump jacks recall the ruins of ghost towns, forgotten monuments of America's decaying industrial past.

This pairing of the pump jacks and the Times Square location merges a classic symbol of American oil production and wealth with the center of New York City commercial culture. "I hope to draw parallels between the American industrial system, transitioning from a past of heavy industry, factories, and teamsters and the disembodied present of electronic mass-media, surface advertising, and consumerism - so clearly embodied in Times Square," explained Meckseper, "The critical placement of the pumps is a conceptual gesture that raises questions about business and capital; land use and resources; wealth and decay; decadence and dependence."

The oil pump sculptures formally refer to the large-scale kinetic sculptures of Jean Tinguely, Alexander Calder, and Mark Di Suvero. Yet, though mirroring the forms and materials of the mid-century oil industry, Meckseper locates her work firmly inside the contemporary debate about American business, wealth and consumerism. The pumps are intended as ignition points for critical discussion engaged directly with modern life, as opposed to operating in the realm of disengaged abstract geometries. They evoke speculation about a functional reality and the notion of use value.

The Last Lot is a generous short-term donation to Art Production Fund from The Shubert Organization, and is part of the Times Square Alliance's public art program that works to bring cutting-edge art to Times Square (www.timessquarenyc.org). "We feel fortunate to have access to such a unique public venue within proximity to Times Square" say Art Production Fund Co-Founders Yvonne Force Villareal and Doreen Remen. "We will program the space through August 2012 with projects that focus on raising environmental consciousness."

Josephine Meckseper (b. 1964) has developed a practice which melds the aesthetic language of modernism with a profound critique of consumerism. In her shop windows, vitrines, installations, photographs, films and magazine projects she draws a direct correlation to the way consumer culture defines and circumvents subjectivity and sublimates the key instruments of individual political agency. Her works have been included in international biennials such as the 2010 Whitney Biennial; the Second Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art (2007); Whitney Biennial: Day for Night (2006); and Biennale d'Art Contemporain de Lyon: Experiencing Duration (2005). She has also had solo exhibitions at the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich; Ausstellungshalle zeitgenössische Kunst, Münster; the Blaffer Gallery/Art Museum of the University of Houston, (2009) and a retrospective at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (2007). Her work was featured at the Museum of Modern Art in New Photography in 2008, Contemplating the Void at the Guggenheim Museum, New York in 2010. A large installation by the artist was included in the Sharjah Biennial 10, Plot for a Biennial (2011).

Art Production Fund (APF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to producing ambitious public art projects, reaching new audiences and expanding awareness through contemporary art. Recent projects include: *SHOW*, Vanessa Beecroft, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1998; *PLAN B*, Rudolf Stingel summer 2004, Grand Central's Vanderbilt Hall and The Walker Art Center; *Prada Marfa*, Elmgreen & Dragset, Valentine, TX, 2005, permanent; *Greeting Card*, Aaron Young, Park Avenue Armory, 2007; *Electric Fountain*, Noble & Webster, Rockefeller Plaza, 2008. *The Ghosts*, Sue de Beer, Park Avenue Armory, New York City, 2011; *After Hours: Murals on The Bowery*, New York City, 2011. David Brooks, *Desert Rooftops*, NYC, 2011. Co-Founders: Yvonne Force Villareal and Doreen Remen; Director: Casey Fremont Crowe.

For more information please visit www.artproductionfund.org

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