

# MAGNANMETZ GALLERY



2013

David Opdyke grew up Schenectady, New York, once known as a beacon of American industry. 'The City that Lights and Hauls the World' was home to Thomas Edison's Machine Works, G.E. and ALCO. Coming of age in the 1970's, Opdyke witnessed the rapid decline of manufacturing and nature's subsequent takeover of a city's abandoned remains. He also witnessed the bulldozers bury the surrounding woods and farmland to make sprawling new suburban developments. Those images of transformation and decay permeate his work today. Working with an obsessive attention to detail, Opdyke creates immersive art that both delights and disturbs. Hyper-realistic models, intricate sculptures of detritus and civilization's excess, and monuments to failed ideals comprise much of his work. Opdyke meticulously handcrafts each piece, creating a world of familiar oddities, political metaphors, and freakish hybrids. Each piece is a study in duality. In one stroke, Opdyke skewers the bloated excess and selfimportance of political and material structures, while reveling in the absurdity and capabilities of human nature: our innate drive to consume, build, and destroy.

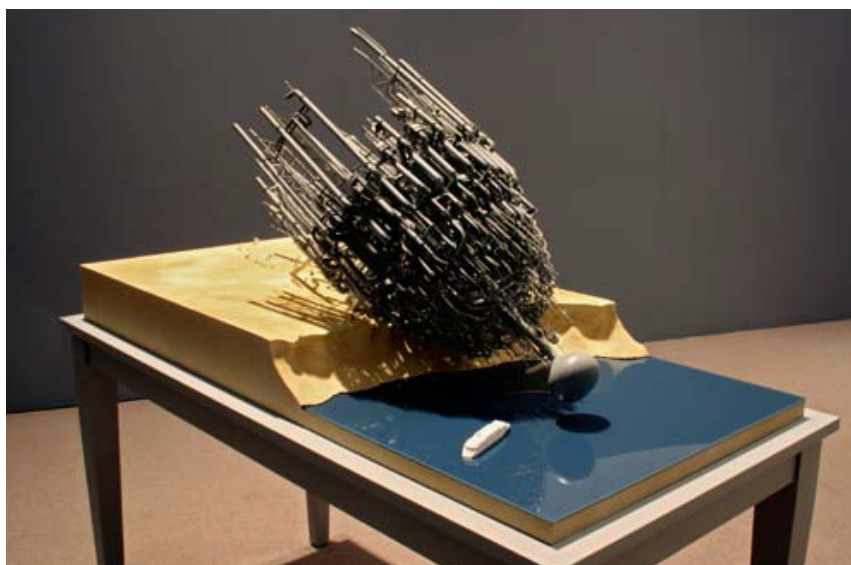


<Dredge, 2007> was created for an exhibition alongside a collection of antique wooden ship models. In a pair of oversized vitrines, a jumble of American ship models, including the everyday tugboat, Titanic, Mayflower, the mythic Jolly Roger, and aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan, lie in wrecks at the bottom of a seafloor, crushed by jutting rocks and slowly merging with the green muck. The classic style and commanding presence of the two vitrines give <Dredge> the authority of a museum exhibit, but the purpose of this exhibit is not at all clear.

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<Zenith, 2008> is a sweeping vision of a disturbing new ecology: a landscape of merging industrial and natural forms. Dented storage tanks, broken cliffs and old fuel pipes grow together under a thick carpet of weeds and vines. If you examine the crumbling rocks and metal and peer through the thick foliage, you will find signs of ordinary life in the wilderness: backpackers, rock climbers, tour guides, and deer.



<Nadir, 2008> presents a towering wonder of industrial systems - oil refining, ventilation, communications, food processing, heating, water filtration, data management, and others unidentifiable - that has come crashing to earth on a remote desert shore.

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<Fixed Cycle, 2011-2012> is a thorough fusion of natural and industrial systems: wastewater plumbing as vegetation. The installation is an indoor garden of ordinary PVC pipes bent into odd plant forms - some elegant, some awkward, others emerging from the wall or connected to the floor. The cherry blossomlike flowers sprouting from each one are in fact clusters of tiny pink plastic toilets, hundreds of them connected by an intricate network of miniature pipes and fittings, the twists and turns becoming stems, branches, and roots.

Opdyke built <Curio Failures, 2008> to house the remnants of his failed sculptures and unfinished projects, but the collection grew to include failures of other kinds. Neglected infrastructure, unfinished malls, misguided ideologies - each misstep is memorialized. Miniature monuments to big failed ideas.

“My goal is to capture the tipping point between coherence and chaos. You can see the plan, the intent to channel complex forces and ideas; you can also see the frayed edges, the strain on the system, the hopelessness of control.”

- David Opdyke Text edited by Liz Yisun Kwon / Curator, Editor : Park Minsun, \*\*\*Image courtesy of the Artist  
David Opdyke : David Opdyke was born in Schenectady, NY in 1969 and currently lives and works in Queens, NY. He received his BFA in Painting and Sculpture from the University of Cincinnati. His work has been exhibited in numerous institutions across North America and Europe, including solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, CT, and The Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C. In 2011, he completed a large-scale permanent installation at a new public school in Brooklyn commissioned by New York City's Percent for Art Program