

ZURICH

Rachel Khedoori

HAUSER & WIRTH

Six years after a comprehensive solo exhibition at Kunsthalle Basel, Rachel Khedoori returned to Switzerland for her second solo show at Hauser & Wirth Zurich. Interiors—spaces inhabited both physically and mentally—still form her main subject matter, but for this show she abstained from the walk-in film installations she's become known for and focused on sculptures: small-scale models of rooms, mostly with the same floor plan though otherwise unlike, and sculptures of furniture, such as beds and armoires. These miniature versions of familiar domestic décor seem to be haunted by memories and dreams. One recalls the passage in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) in which he says that in dreams the human body is often represented by a house, the parts of which symbolize individual organs. One room, painted black and viewed from above (untitled; all works 2007), is equipped with basic features—door, windows, bed, closet—but surrounded by a second "shell" that lacks openings except at the top; it is an imprisoned room, with no way out other than by flying. Another small room reverses the expected ratio of space to matter, representing a compact "block" rather than an interior "space." A smooth cube made from foam and plaster and covered with yellow wax, its rectangular openings turn into cavernous, carved holes; it is appropriately titled *Butter Cave*. The work evokes various motifs from childhood



Rachel Khedoori.
Butter Cave, 2007.
foam, plaster, and wax,
5 3/4 x 6 0/8 x 3 6/8".

memory: the difficult movement of nightmares, when space turns into dense, sticky matter; the desire to build caves and hide-aways; even playing with food. The work also has art-historical resonances, recalling predecessors such as Joseph Beuys's *Fat Corners* and *Fat Chairs* of the '60s.

Another interior, open on two sides like a dollhouse, is all in green, decorated with wallpaper made from photographic depictions of a sunny forest arranged in kaleidoscopic patterns; the room holds two separate and differently oriented beds. It is hard to resist making biographical connections to the artist's breakup with her partner Jason Rhoades shortly before he died in 2006. Another sculpture consists of a single, thin sculpture of a mattress covered with waxed black sheets and a cushion, resting on a worktable as base; I couldn't help but think of the marble mattress

on which Pauline Bonaparte lingers in the famous sculpture, 1805–1808, by Antonio Canova. Another ensemble consists of two stacked, bulky beds, one covered in white, one in black. The black one lies heavily on top of the white, but head and foot are reversed, so that the "head-side" of the black bed leans downward.

One entire gallery space was taken up by a whole house—a maze of interconnected rooms, open on top. The walls are mirrored, reflecting the chunks of white, yellow, and black plaster that occupy each room. The chunks have cavelike openings that align with doors and windows. Khedoori has used mirrors before, in her large, cinematic room installations, and here we are confronted with a spiraling *mise en abyme*, in which minimal sculpture and uncanny inhabitation, physical and mental space, intertwine in a meandering labyrinth of meaning.

—Eva Scharrer