



**AMY STOBER**

*Hand in My Pocket*

November 23, 2024 – January 11, 2025

368 Broadway #511, NY

Page is pleased to present *Hand in My Pocket*, a solo exhibition of new sculptures by New York artist Amy Stober.

The following text is written by a close friend of the artist, recounting the lead up to the show:

Amy sends a 30 minute voice memo walking me through her thought process with each piece in her upcoming show. She recorded this audio while driving on the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, and periodically I can hear her keys jingling or her turn signal tick. I listen to the voice memo while driving to work, and it creates this uncanny effect where it feels as if I'm on the phone with her, just an hour out of sync.

The works in the show are casts of thrifted novelty bags, each acting as a proxy of a woman experiencing the world—shapeshifting, contorting, frozen in action, and continuing to become other things. Through quintessential symbols of girlhood, New York iconography, and contemporary artifacts of fashion and domestic craft, Amy constructs objects that add another layer in the degrees of interpretation in which her encyclopedic archive blends cultural history with personal experiences.

In creating these layers, an object becomes a bag, the bag becomes an artwork, and through the casting process, these surfaces hold the marks of reinvention and illusion, clues of a very real physical transformation. In his book *Delirious New York*, Rem Koolhaas describes Manhattan, "...each block is covered with several layers of phantom architecture in the form of past occupancies...popular fantasies that provide alternative images to the New York that exists." These works are architectural, even anthropological; however I'm not sure if they are coming *from* New York or *becoming* it. Cantilevered parasol bags, stiffened fringe purses become the suspension cables of bridges. Art Deco buildings are the icons of modernity, ending up on souvenirs and then appearing in the works as metallic patinas and the ubiquitous renderings of the skyline.

The way we summarize New York, distilled and re-presented into symbols, echoes the forced, if not nostalgic, fundamental emblems of girlhood. A purse, a ballerina, whitewashed wicker, pink and lime green stripes, all hardened melodramatic facsimiles, born out of the generational cues of womanhood. Foundational objects of feminine preoccupation, told "This is what you are."

Amy tells this optimistic story from childhood where her mother tells her if she ever sees a penny face-side down, to flip it over, so someone else can find it and have good luck. We see these pennies on a wicker bag, all either from the year 1963 or 1994, the birth year of the artist's mom and her respectively. From her Grandmother, Scandinavian patterns and the craft of knitting as the ground for contemporary relics.

How these generational codes endure through transformation is not only by memory, but by collective cultural experience. Amy's works reflect on the intersection of identity, material culture, and the complexities of feminine construction in today's world, where beauty and self-presentation is as much about reinvention as it is about tradition.

—Matt DeLong