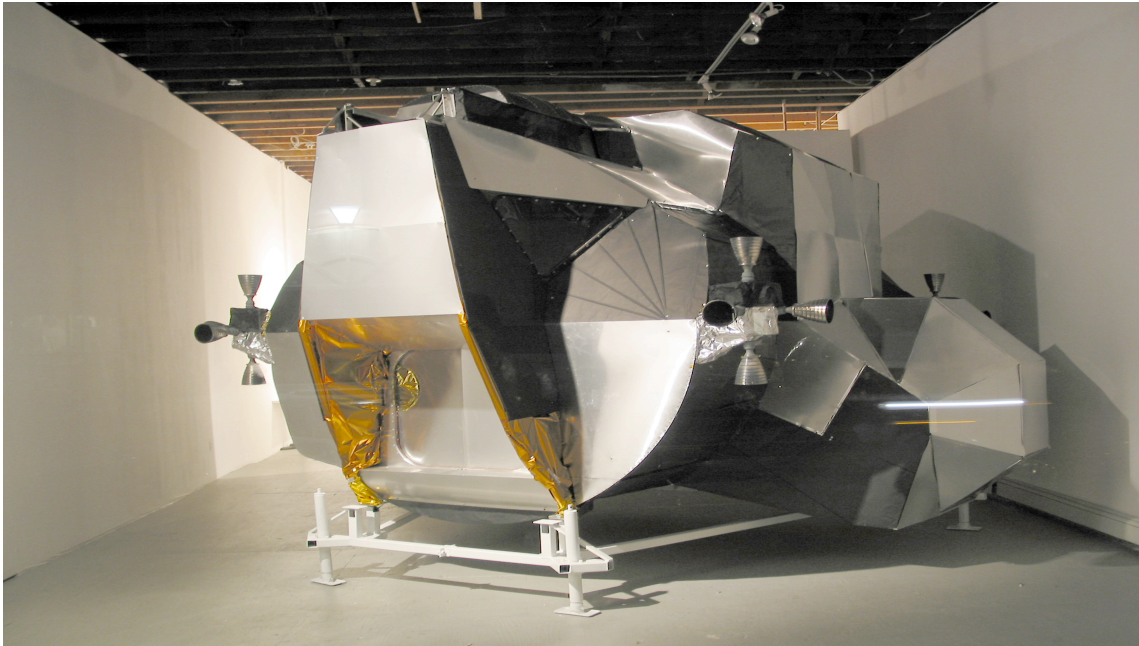


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[PRESS RELEASE]



> **EXTRAVEHICULAR ACTIVITY** **STEVEN BROWER**

EXHIBITION DATES: SEPTEMBER 10 – OCTOBER 8, 2004

GALLERY HOURS: FRIDAY TO MONDAY 1 TO 7 PM

Parker's Box is delighted to announce "Extravehicular Activity", the first solo show at the gallery by Steven Brower. The exhibition extends this artist's preoccupation with the Apollo moon mission era - its reality, mythology, and artistic and social parallels. Making artworks that pertain to the built environment, and the conditions that both make possible and impede the artist's ability to produce artwork at all, Brower's practice stems from questioning his own place in the world as artist and individual, and gravitates involuntarily towards metaphor on multiple levels- from the humble to the grandiose. If Apollo at one time encapsulated the hopes and pride of the nation, (accompanying as it did the Cold War and the Vietnam war) it subsequently tended to symbolize disillusion, and the deflation of ambition. "Extravehicular Activity" follows the artist's recent inclusion in the video program "Fear of Flying", recently presented at the gallery, featuring Brower's video "Trailer for Epic: Conrad Carpenter, The Underemployed Astronaut". Brower's space persona will be making further appearances in the current exhibition.

The exhibition title: "Extravehicular Activity", space jargon that indicates astronaut pursuits outside of the protection of the spaceship, posits Brower's interest in this vehicle for safely transporting astronauts to and from the moon – the Lunar Excursion Module (or LEM) - and its existence as a relic of pioneering American achievement, simultaneously lingering as a symbol of disappointment and wastefulness. Here, Brower examines his interest in the mythologies of technology, while commenting on the plight of an artistic career: "The LEM in particular was a wonderful object because while existing as the pinnacle of technological and practical development, it was also made to be thrown away the instant its usefulness was expired." Brower is resolutely an artist who makes things, as a result of his own curiosity, research, and experimentation with the world around him. In fact, this artist's unfashionable commitment to fabricating everything himself, creates yet another wistful parallel with the Apollo program, where almost every rocket was an improvement on the previous one, and as such was virtually a prototype, carefully crafted piece by piece. Brower sees these space artifacts as having operated in a context that has further parallels with the art world, and exploits this resonance by making his own replicas. Both have a

“specialized function...in rarefied environments (leading perhaps to general disdain and lack of interest from the larger public).”

The exhibition at Parker’s Box will consist of Steven Brower’s faithful reconstruction of an Apollo Lunar Excursion Module (Ascent Stage), a variety of space travel related paraphernalia with “real” objects and documents borrowed from space museums, and the artist himself as the character Conrad Carpenter, Underemployed Spaceman. The exhibition incorporates the artist’s working models, drawings, a user’s guide for the LEM, as well as a handful of useful navigating devices. For example, the LEM is equipped with an audio loop of Walt Whitman’s, “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”, a text of great humanity, that reaches out across the ages to future generations of commuters, reminding them of “The similitude of the past, and those of the future”, and at the same time questioning “My great thoughts, as I supposed them, were they not in reality meagre?” Good advice indeed for those who would be space pioneers...or artists.

Steven Brower has previously exhibited at SMART Project Space, Holland, Galleria Franco Noero, Italy, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Zealand, Dunlop Gallery, Saskatchewan Canada and Lehman College Art Gallery, Joseph Helman and Sculpture Center, New York. In addition his work was previously shown at Lombard-Freid and PS1, New York. Steve Brower lives and works in Brooklyn.