

Louis Stern Fine Arts is pleased to present

George Herms

On and Off the Wall

September 21 – November 2, 2013

A work by George Herms may contain a well-worn basketball skin. Costume jewelry, dulled with age, still sparkles when affixed to a carefully chosen rusty can. As choreographed by the artist, wrapping paper, pill bottles, handles, and newspapers in French, English and Italian interact to produce complex even tender compositions. Within the rhythm of each and every object, Herms zeros in on the common denominator and harnesses each to other, creating a miraculous unison. Whether encased in boxes, pinned to the wall or suspended mid-air, in every decade of his prodigious career, the works sing.

In the mid-50's, after a brief stint studying engineering at Berkeley, Herms crossed paths with assemblage artist Wallace Berman. An introduction to the Beat Poets and their freewheeling worldview followed. Herms soon became associated with the influential Southern-Cal art group Semina, producing "found-object poems," sculpture/portraits built of re-functioned objects and books. By 1961, his work was included in MOMA's *The Art of Assemblage (The Poet)* and another work (*The Librarian*) was placed at the Whitney in 1962 in *Fifty California Artists*.

Through the years, Herms has shown work nationally and internationally (he was prominently featured in the Getty's PST initiative), changed venues and even mediums (his jazz opera, *The Artist's Life*, premiered at REDCAT in 2011). However, his allegiance to the making of things has never wavered. He remains the real deal: an artist's artist complete with a poet's eye and a musician's heart.

This exhibition marks the artist's initial presentation with the gallery.

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Friday 10am - 6pm; Saturday 11am - 5pm

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