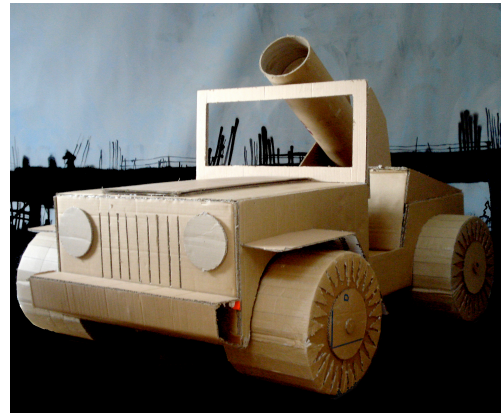
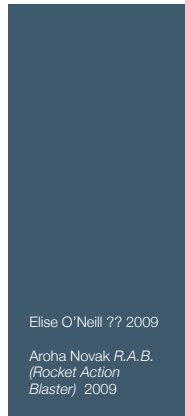


# AROHA NOVAK & ELISE O'NEILL | *EXPENSIVE RUBBISH*

1 -24 December 2009



For *Expensive Rubbish* Elise O'Neill and Aroha Novak present handmade military and consumer items which have been constructed from recycled materials; they take issue with these products which feed off capitalist narratives of fear and desire. Underlying their work is a critique of consumer fetishism and media sensation which negates, obscures and denies the socially and environmentally destructive forces at play behind these systems. Their work creates a dialogue between both personal expense and governmental expense, questioning the viability and longevity of either.

O'Neill's oversized home appliances, handmade from recycled cardboard and newspaper, invert the throw-away mentality of consumer culture. Their overbearing size positions evokes childhood, when normal things are bigger than we are. In contrast to the consumer appliances sits a newspaper wheelbarrow, filled large stone diamonds of various cuts. Lust for the extravagance of diamonds epitomises the extreme impact and wake of devastation the drive for acquisition can have.

Novak's child-size military vehicles allude to the way war is fantasised, flattened and re-packaged through media depictions. Using the lens of a child's perception of reality to emphasise our inability to grasp and even access the complexity and consequences of international politics and war when obscured by propaganda and media sensation. Novak has created a fragile fantasy world from recycled materials - cardboard boxes and fluffy fabrics, reducing cities and weapons of mass destruction to playthings.