

MARK HANDFORTH
BLACK STAR
MAY 2 – JUNE 21 2014

OPENING RECEPTION: 6 – 8 PM

In 'Black Star' (2014), Mark Handforth, presents us with a dilemma. A fallen star that no longer shines. Within a cheerfulness of form, a darkness creeps through. The star is a dancer, stepping on one foot, balancing itself against gravity. But like a Giacometti figure, the work is as much a container as it is an image of the pressure of the world beyond itself. Broken, crumpled, reassembled, it becomes a product of civilization. In Mark Handforth's hands a star becomes an artifact, a sign. And like a fallen angel, it succumbs to human's despair.

Also on view, from May 24th through September 28th, *Sidewalk Island*, commissioned specifically for Governors Island to mark the opening of the new park, and curated by Tom Eccles. Handforth has created a series of totem-like works that pop up within the contoured landscape, including a crumpled five-point saffron colored star at the Battery, visible from Yankee Pier and the Brooklyn-bound ferry, and, as the centerpiece to the exhibition, a thirty feet tall bronze tree with lopped off limbs cradling a blue phone in the v-shape of its branches as if casually holding a cigar in its fingers, echoing the verticality of Lady Liberty in the distance. Nearby "Weeping Hydrant" is a molten cast iron version of its real-life counterpart, here like many of Handforth's sculptures, subtly suggesting human form. While irrefutably claiming their space within the landscape, Handforth's sculptures refuse easy symbolism and their post-punkish sensibility embraces the democratic and populist nature of Governors Island.

Selected solo exhibitions: Rolling Stop, Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, (2012); Chicago Plaza Project, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2011); Hessel Museum of Art, at Bard College, New York (2011); Kunstneres Hus (with Urs Fischer and Georg Herold), Oslo, Norway (2009) ; Concentration 51, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas (2007); Kunsthaus, Zurich (2005); Le Consortium, Dijon (2003); UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2002)

