



Josh Blackwell

Neveruses (Lift Hook Force), 2016

Plastic, wood, silk, paper

Opening Bid: \$1,500

Artist Statement

This work is part of an ongoing series called *Neveruses* (never·uses). *Neveruses* are lumpish, androgynous painting-objects comprised of recovered plastic bags and colored fibers such as wool yarn, silk thread, and patterned cloth. These hybrid devices are neither useful nor redundant, though both are implied.

The works are crafted in the following manner: plastic shopping bags are collected from interstitial spaces such as city streets, kitchen cupboards, or car trunks. In the studio, the bags are stitched shut using self-taught, heterogeneous methods that evoke embroidery, knitting, and weaving. The bag acts as substrate and armature, initially supporting then subsequently giving way to interwoven yarns. The stitches behave as mark and material, penetrating, distressing, and ornamenting the bag. When finished, the piece coheres visually around the yarns. Only the dematerialized bag's silhouette remains, distinguished by the handles at the top. The transient, semi-degraded plastic bag becomes fixed.

This particular piece was inspired by Grandma Moses' *Taking in the Laundry* (1951).