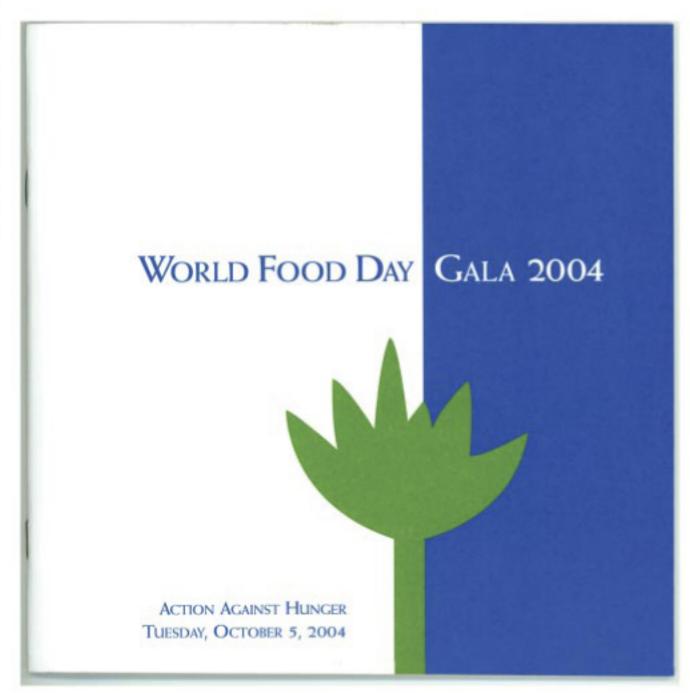
WORLD
FOOD DAY
GALA 2004
ACTION AGAINST
HUNGER FOR
PRESIDENT
NELSON MANDELA



VIRGINIE SOMMET

Action Against Hunger has been fortunate to have artist Virginie Sommet create the Spoon Awards especially for this year's gala in honor of Martin Franklin, Dr. Yvonne Grellety and President Nelson Mandela on the occasion of the International Network of Action Against Hunger's 25th anniversary. Following this Gala Event, on Thursday, October 7th, Nexus Projects Gallery will host an exhibition by Virginie Sommet entitled "Humanity" to benefit Action Against Hunger. The show "Humanity" is composed of 21 sculpture-installations by the artist Virginie Sommet. An MFA graduate of the University of Paris, Sommet has shown both in Europe and the United States at such venues as Galerie 170, Broan Gallery and the Andy Warhol Factory. Assembling disparate common objects into artistically coherent wholes, Sommet employs a labor-intensive "post-technological" method that involves meditative concentration and physical discipline. This technique, involving a direct engagement with the numerous material components of each work, dates back to the earliest collages and assemlages of Picasso and Schwitters. Today, it is the province of contemporary creators of highly conceptual, sometimes humorous ensembles, such as Portia Munson, Sarah Sze and Fred Tomaselli. Beneath the engaging surface of kitchen utensils, dime store toys, etc. lie serious thematic concerns. Some works like the one composed of "before and after" photo pairs, set up an implicit contrast between the economically advanced West and the Third World. In other pieces, involving mirrors, the viewer is automatically integrated in the artwork itself, thus challenging the separation between viewer and object. Throughout this body of work, mundane components are put to the purpose of social commentary and esthetic experimentation and so foster an integration of high art of everyday life. In all these ways and more, Sommet strives to break down that comfortable distance between the perceiver and reality. Hers is a strategy based upon and requiring empathy — the very principle that knits isolate individuals into a collective "Humanity" and that underlies the efforts of Action Against Hunger.

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WORLD FOOD DAY GALA

THE METROPOLITAN CLUB OF NEW YORK CITY OCTOBER 5, 2004

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