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# 11.

## Oscar Enberg

**Oscar Enberg** concedes there is comedy and slapstick in his work yet this carefully considered Auckland sculptor does not make light of his subject matter. Still, it is hard not to find the funny in sculpture inspired by an episode of *The Simpsons*. Enberg's first commercial solo show at Hopkinson Mossman is an extension of a recent body of work entitled *The Pynchons* that Enberg exhibited last year at Gloria Knight, an artist-run space he co-manages. The work draws on three popular culture references – *The Simpsons*, in particular drunken lout **Barney Gumble**; 1990s sitcom *The John Larroquette show*, which is structured on Alcohol Anonymous' 12-step programme; and **Thomas Pynchon's** short story *Entropy*. The sloppy vein of intoxication unites them all but also provides the basis for the deeper theme of entropy, a concern that has long fascinated sculptors.

Enberg studied sculpture at Ilam School of Fine Arts in Christchurch and his practice is firmly grounded in formalised sculpture. Collections of warped objects that may at first look like assemblages are actually customised constructions. Enberg works with fabricators and craft makers to create forms from a variety of different materials, including glass, metal, oyster shell and wood. The largest sculpture in the new show is a computer desk that would normally be made from cheap melamine or formica but in this case has been reproduced in American oak by a master carpenter. "There is a false economy valuable materials have when put with familiar forms," says Enberg.

**Sarah Hopkinson** of Hopkinson Mossman says Enberg's work can feel like stage sets with all the dramatic action contained within the objects. "It's interesting because there is a lot of work at the moment, especially from his generation, that is being described as Internet art and has some sort of dematerialization whereas his is very material and in that sense feels almost classical in the way he constructs forms," she says.

*Frances Morton*

Oscar Enberg's debut exhibition at Hopkinson Mossman in Auckland runs from 30 January to 1 March 2014.



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From left:

Oscar Enberg, *The Pynchons SO1 EO1*, 2013. Installation view: Gloria Knight, Auckland.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND HOPKINSON MOSSMAN, AUCKLAND

Oscar Enberg, *Door for John Hemingway* (detail), 2013. Two-pot automotive paint on engraved door, permanent marker, powder-coated aluminium, copper-plated pewter, pewter, hand blown glass, door knobs, 198 x 71 x 15cm.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND HOPKINSON MOSSMAN, AUCKLAND