

## Ruth Thomas-Edmond

*Sugared heap*, 2012, cardboard, PVA glue, acrylic paint

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Ruth Thomas-Edmond overturns the traditionally subservient role that drawing has to sculpture as a mere act of preparation. The second of her large-scale *Heap* sculptures, *Sugared heap* is made from painted corrugated cardboard rectangles, interlocked to form a seemingly ever-growing whole. This process comes directly out of and operates as a parallel mode of investigation to her drawing and painting practices. She describes the making of the sculpture as being like drawing in its insistence on a 'hand to paper' relationship.

Whether drawing, painting or making sculpture, Thomas-Edmond works intuitively to slowly accumulate form and mass. As these forms grow and evolve they acquire energies of their own and seem set on fleeing the limitations of the page, the frame, or their allocated floor space. *Sugared heap* realises the potential that Thomas-Edmond's two-dimensional work always seems to aspire to—to be manifest and mobile in the material world. Encountering this sculpture feels like opening a pop-up book where forms become objects that leap off the page into our space.

Thomas-Edmond's interest in occupying transitory states extends to almost every element of this sculpture: its selection of everyday materials, the choice of a colour that hovers between the natural and the synthetic, the exposure of the cardboard in its painted and raw states, and, perhaps most importantly, its placement in a non-site of the gallery.

Wrapping the sculpture around the glass lift shaft in a thoroughfare between two galleries and two floors removes it from the polite demands of the white cube. The sculpture seems to shy away from the gallery space and all of its connotations, opening itself up instead to the possibilities of this transitory non-space. The true colour and most complex forms of the sculpture rely on perspectives and vantage points other than those allowed through normal gallery experience, including the possibility of moving through and inside the work via the lift. On this site the activity is primarily social or functional rather than aesthetic, people walk and talk rather than look at art. It is in this disputed zone, in between art and action, that the multifarious readings of the sculpture have full reign.