

STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

'Longing Lasting'

Claire Barclay

25 November 2015 – 23 January 2016

Private view Tuesday 24 November, 6-8pm



Stephen Friedman Gallery is pleased to present 'Longing Lasting', an exhibition of new works by Scottish artist Claire Barclay.

Pivoted on themes of continuity, need, and desire, the show combines interventionist sculpture and print works. Barclay's hybrid objects are centred on the physical and the psychological tensions that exist between contrasting elements. They are at once recognisable and foreign and act as a surreal reflection of the world around us. This exhibition is the culmination of a year long exploration into the ideas, materials and methods which formed the basis for her recent museum show 'Overworkings' at Touchstones Rochdale.

Barclay is a leading figure in a generation of graduates from the Glasgow School of Art in the 1990s: a group of young artists studying in the city who rose to the fore of the contemporary art world. Barclay studied environmental art before refining her unique language which engages in both natural and manmade materials. She has since been the subject of solo presentations at the Venice Biennale, Tate Britain, Whitechapel Art Gallery and Camden Arts Centre.

In 'Longing Lasting', Barclay is inspired by the innate qualities we encounter through the history of domestic objects. A mirror, a pillow, a blanket, a comb: such items have become inseparable with humanity's own history and here we find their forms subtly referenced and teased in the sculptures and prints. The materials she chooses refer to both the organic and the synthetic: ceramics, metal, leather and thread. Always eschewing the readymade, each object Barclay makes is hand-crafted or uniquely machined. Here, white fabric printed in rich tones of reddish-brown and imbued with fingerprints rupture the clean lines of the metal elements. There is something beautifully refined, and yet subtly unkempt at play here.

In one gallery, we encounter a sculptural form framed by suspended metal rods and black curved steel tubes. Various shapes are teased out of the overall structure which feature Barclay's signature circular motifs bound with black thread. The work shifts as we move around it and view its changing form. A hidden focus is found in a small machined aluminium object which resembles an ancient fertility figure. Its curves and angles are replicated in ceramic shapes and in three screen-prints rendered in a pale pink which form a backdrop to the installation. Intonations of the flesh and of the earth collide.

In another gallery, a drape of red leather dominates the central sculpture. Piercing its surface are metal combs, their forms suggesting something familiar and intimate yet potentially vicious. Accompanying the installation is a series of seven relief prints rendered in a bright red ink. They are printed from bespoke wooden shapes and they retain the full texture of the grain. Featuring overlapping and interconnecting circles, the prints capture a vibrant movement enhanced by the precarious tensions inherent in the sculpture it overlooks.

While the world around us has changed through advances of technology, our human instinct remains drawn to the ancient motifs that have recurred throughout history. 'Longing Lasting' demonstrates Barclay's belief that making is both a physical and a conceptual act, similarly our response to her work is both instinctive and visceral.

STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY

Notable solo and group exhibitions include; 'Claire Barclay', Touchstones Rochdale, Lancashire, UK (2015); 'Generation: 25 Years of Contemporary Art in Scotland', Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, The Scottish National Gallery and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland (2014); 'Claire Barclay, Another Kind of Balance', Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland (2013-2014); 'Funktion/Dysfunktion', Kunstzentrum, Neues Museum, Nürnberg, Germany (2013); 'Reading off the Surface', Skulpturi, Copenhagen, Denmark (2011); 'Shadow Spans' at the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2011-2010); 'Pale Heights', MUDAM, Luxembourg (2009); 'Claire Barclay', Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK (2009); 'Open Wide', Camden Arts Centre, London, England (2008); 'Fault on the Right Side', Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig, Germany (2007) and 'Half-Light', Tate Britain, London, England (2003).

Gallery One: 'Wayne Gonzales', 25 November - 23 January 2016

Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 6pm and Saturday, 11am - 5pm

For further details please contact Mary Tagg: +44 (0) 20 7494 1434 / mary@stephenfriedman.com

For sales enquiries please contact sales@stephenfriedman.com