

Philip Martin Gallery

Katy Cowan

COMPRESSIONAL(S)

February 28 – March 28, 2015

Opening reception: Saturday, January 10, 4-7pm



Cherry and Martin is pleased to present Katy Cowan's first solo exhibition at the gallery, which will include sun prints, rope works and wax-cast cinderblock pieces.

Katy Cowan
Looser
2015
Sun-sensitive paint on cotton, poplar frame
54 x 47.75 x 2.5 in, 137.16 x 121.29 x 6.35 cm framed

Katy Cowan's sun prints use camera-less photographic process to record the place where she lives and works. Her work engages such themes as compression and duration, love and the body, memory and presence. For the past 6 months, Cowan has lived in Milwaukee, quite near the small town in Wisconsin where she grew up. Cowan's Milwaukee studio stands among the abandoned brickyards - Cream City Bricks, Badger Block - that made the place a middle American industrial powerhouse in the middle of the past century. Her sun prints (multi-layered three-to-six exposure pieces on cloth) record fallen leaves and snow piles, shoe tracks, tools, bricks and 2 x 4's, rebar, paintbrushes and other objects from Cowan's immediate environment. Because there's little sun in Wisconsin in the winter, waiting for the sun has come to serve as a metaphor for life in her temporary home.

While living in Milwaukee, Cowan has taught art classes part-time at Mount Mary University, a Catholic university with a long history of social activism. Cowan herself went to Catholic parochial schools growing up; the experience of teaching at the school has brought up those memories. Inspired by Sister Corita Kent's activist art practice, the nuns of Mount Mary University produced vast numbers of screen prints in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The cast-off scraps of these prints can still be found on the campus. Cowan repurposes these scraps into rope works; her wax-cast cinderblock pieces are embedded with these ropes, as well as pieces of concrete, ceramic pieces, fabric painting scraps, prairie flowers, gloves, and faint color. Cowan writes, "I chose wax for these pieces because of the luminosity and concrete for its heaviness." In Cowan's columnar arrangements of cast cinderblocks, the compression of objects and image in space and time is evident.

Katy Cowan (b. 1982 in Lake Geneva, WI) received her BFA at the University of Puget Sound (Tacoma, WA) and recently earned an MFA at Otis College of Art and Design (Los Angeles, CA). Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include Dan Devening (Chicago, IL); Green Gallery (Milwaukee, WI); and LTD (Los Angeles, CA). Her work has also been included in group exhibitions at The Torrance Art Museum (Torrance, CA) and Los Angeles Nomadic Division (Los Angeles, CA). Cowan lives and works in Los Angeles, CA and Milwaukee, WI.

Philip Martin Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 11am-6pm and by appointment. For further information and images please contact the gallery at +310-559-0100 or

info@philipmartingallery.com.

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