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Smokescreen

Marie Sivak

September 6-30, 2012

Reception for the artist: Thursday, September 6, 6–9 pm

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of Marie Sivak's innovative sculptures and drawings. Combining traditional stone carving with video projection, this new body of work explores ideas of language and deception. A catalogue with an essay by Curator Charlotta Kotik accompanies the exhibition.



Photo by Dan Kvitka

In *Smokescreen* Marie Sivak explores the use of language as a form of psychological warfare. In Sivak's striking works of meticulously carved stone, the use of language as a smoke screen to obscure intention finds an additional layer of meaning. Sivak embeds video imagery into her stone objects, which become specters of human dramas. *Vicious* represents a scattered pile of odd sized envelopes carved from limestone, marble, and travertine. At the center of the pile there is a video projection. After a moment one realizes that the video is projecting from inside the pile, through the clouded atmosphere of the stone; the surface of the sculpture becoming a kind of smoky screen. A woman's hands manipulate some white lettering, pushing it about like game pieces. The text in the projection isn't coherent but instead raises questions about the transparency of language, the significance of the handmade, and technology's role in communication.

In this exhibition, Sivak includes a collection of richly layered graphite drawings that further investigate language as a tool for treachery and deception. Language disintegrates into jumbles of letters thrown within the dark confines of the slate-like space of Sivak's drawings. While occasionally we see whole words and even sentences, they are often lost in the accumulation of meaningless objects of the alphabet. Language becomes visual and visceral in these vignettes suggesting fragments of a complex betrayal, the void between language and experience, and the dark solitude that results.

Marie Sivak's interdisciplinary work investigates the psychology of memory and the nature of human relationships in contemporary terms. Sivak received her MFA in Sculpture and Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University, and her BFA in Sculpture from the University of the Arts, Philadelphia. She has received grants, fellowships, and awards from the Ruth Chenven Foundation, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Regional Arts and Cultural Council in Portland, Oregon, and the Yeck National Young Sculptors Prize. Her work has been shown nationally and internationally in Europe, Japan, and South America. Public collections include the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the City of Volterra, Italy. Sivak lives and works in Portland, Oregon.

Charlotta Kotik, a native of Prague, is the Curator Emerita of the Brooklyn Museum. Over the course of her career she has organized over 100 museum exhibitions, working with artists such as Kerry James Marshall, Mariko Mori, and Jenny Holzer. In 1993 she was the United States commissioner for the Venice Biennale where she curated an exhibition of works by Louise Bourgeois, which travelled internationally. She lives and works in Brooklyn.

Funding for this exhibition has been provided by grants from The Ford Family Foundation and The Oregon Arts Commission.

A.I.R. Gallery is located at 111 Front Street, #228, in the DUMBO neighborhood of Brooklyn.

For directions, please see www.airgallery.org

For additional information, please contact Director, Julie Lohnes, at 212-255-6651 or email jlhohnes@airgallery.org

A.I.R. Gallery – Celebrating 40 years of advocating for women in the visual arts.