

For Immediate Release:

Carina Brandes
Willkommen
January 19th – February 16th 2014
83 Grand Street

Team (gallery, inc.) is pleased to announce a solo show of new work by Carina Brandes. Entitled *Willkommen*, the exhibition will run from 19 January through 16 February 2014. Team is located at 83 Grand Street, between Wooster and Greene, on the ground floor. Concurrently, our 47 Wooster Street space will house a one-person show by Los Angeles-based painter David Ratcliff.

Carina Brandes's black and white photographs are fever dreams: the familiar becomes foreign, the quotidian surreal. They explore the uncanny through unexpected juxtapositions of ordinary ephemera -- people, animals and things. The images are neither documents of the real nor subjective creations, occupying instead a strange in-between of truth and fiction. She frequently takes herself as subject, often with other women similar to her in appearance. The actors are present but anonymous: they appear in the nude, faces at least partially shrouded by shadow or long, blonde hair, each of them a double for the artist. The bucolic settings are empty and deliberately un-iconic, almost as though, without these pictures, they might not exist at all. The artist's *mise-en-scenes*, captured using the camera's timer function, strike a balance of delicate orchestration and the unanticipated, creating a powerful sense of the *Unheimlich*.

These deeply atmospheric photos capture highly specific moments without offering any narrative clarity. They produce a powerful tension by suggesting a discernable story while never deigning to tell one. Blur and suggested movement endow them with a cinematic quality. Like Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills*, these images present the viewer with a world that is artificial and ultimately unavailable. However, where Sherman evokes a bygone era of Hollywood glamor, Brandes's visual vocabulary comes closer to B-horror films and home movies. The actors seem to exist solely for the camera's eye, while simultaneously appearing unaware of it. The self-timer allows the photos to act as records of performers unembarrassed by an audience. In this aspect, they are reminiscent of the self-documentary work of Francesca Woodman and Bruce Nauman.

Brandes ties her own artistic practice to that of magical ritual, with her actors' choreographed but bizarre positions recalling pagan rites, while the prevalence of water and other liquids as motifs suggest alchemy. Each figure appears as a ghostly double; even the photographic representation of Brandes herself acts as the artist's doppelgänger. The images capture moments of transformation, while also enacting transformation themselves.

The forms in the photographs immediately read as live human bodies; however, because of their hidden faces and physical similarity, they also appear strangely formal and impersonal. In one photo, a line of four women lie on their backs, the tops of their heads toward the camera, their legs in the air to support a fifth outstretched body. The figures become sculptural: their pale skin turns to porcelain or marble against the black background, and the strangeness of the subject matter is all but eclipsed by the elegance of its physicality.

These photographs consider the female body as an artistic subject. One image shows the artist nude but covered in mud or dark paint, suspended mid-jump. Articles of striped and monochrome clothing hung in a circle behind her recall such divergent forms as minimalist painting and punk. She is forthcoming with her body while managing to remain hidden -- the application of a paint-like material directly to her body serves to highlight representational art's tendency to simultaneously display and obscure a woman's person.

Brandes has been the subject of monographic exhibitions both in the United States and Europe. Her New York exhibition comes directly after *Welcome*, a sister-show at BQ Gallery in Berlin.

This is the artist's first show at Team.

For further information and/or photographs please call 212 279 9219. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm and Sunday, Noon to 6pm.