

JAMES COHAN GALLERY

HELENE APPEL

September 4 – October 4, 2014

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 4, 6-8:00pm



HELENE APPEL, *Plastic Sheet (3)*, Watercolor on linen, 74 x 47 in. (188 x 119.5 cm)

James Cohan Gallery is pleased to present the US debut solo exhibition by German artist **Helene Appel**, opening on September 4th and running through October 4th, 2014.

Helene Appel chooses to paint things from everyday life, among them rumpled textiles, stitched thread, netting, puddles of liquid, piles of rice, plastic bags, floor-sweepings and small electrical components. She renders these domestic objects at actual size in a variety of media from watercolor to oil and encaustic on untreated canvas and burlap. These paintings of familiar things, realistically rendered, become suspended between illusion, gesture, figuration and abstraction.

JAMES COHAN GALLERY

In this exhibition, Appel shows the reach of her practice, anchored by three new series of works: plastic, fabric and meat. The plastic works are evanescent, painted with an economy of gesture, while the large fabric paintings are executed in watercolor that soaks into the rough burlap surface; the weave of the support interacts intensely with the texture of what is being depicted. The paintings of individual butcher cuts of meat, in a glossy impasto of oil and encaustic, make flesh a form of miniature portraiture.

Describing her ideas about painting, Appel explains, "my work is not so much about pretending the real thing is there, but more about the presence of the subject, as well as the presence of the painting in space." Her uncannily realistic execution is indeed highly skilled and deftly rendered, but Appel is most interested in questions of process and the pictorial. She sees her method as a bargaining process to determine each subject's particular demands for its own depiction and how she might meet those demands in technique and composition. The viewer too must bargain with the works on the wall, accepting subject matter with which one would not normally have an aesthetic or emotional relationship.

Appel (born 1976, Karlsruhe, Germany) attended the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Hamburg and received an MA from the Royal College of Art, London. She has been the subject of solo exhibitions including: *Luce, Giorno* (with Antonio Calderara), P420, Bologna, Italy (2014); *Helene Appel, The Approach*, London, UK (2013); *Kaiserringstipendium*, Mönchehaus Museum Goslar, Germany (2011); *Chopping Board*, The Approach, London, UK (2010); *Der Vorschuss*, Luis Campaña, Berlin, Germany (2009). Recent group exhibitions include: *A Scene of Painting Today*, curated by Marco Bazzini and Davide Ferri, Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, Italy (2013); *ÜBER DIE DINGE*, Kulturstiftung Schloss Agathenburg, Agathenburg, Germany (2013); *Object Fictions*, James Cohan Gallery, New York, NY (2012); *Lines of Thought*, Parasol Unit, London, UK (2012); *FORCEMEAT*, Wallspace, New York, NY (2011); *The Library of Babel*, curated by Anna-Catharina Gebbers, 176 Project Space, London, UK (2010); *Augentäuschung*, Kunsthalle Wilhelmshaven, Germany (2010); *Beating The Bounds*, Art Now, curated by Lizzie Carey-Thomas and Clarrie Wallis, Tate Britain, London (2009). Helene Appel lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

For press inquiries, contact Jane Cohan at jane@jamescohan.com or by phone 212-714-9500.