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Isabelle Cornaro
Subterranean II

Opening: 15.03.2018
Exhibition: 16.03.-21.04.2018

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Galerie Mezzanin is pleased to present *Subterranean II*, a solo exhibition by Isabelle Cornaro at Galerie Mezzanin in Geneva.

Drawing on a broad range of techniques, Isabelle Cornaro's work offers a sophisticated meditation on the nature and history of art. Most known for her precise reconfiguration of everyday objects, she has established herself as a leading artist working with installation and film. The new bodies of work presented at Mezzanin articulate Cornaro's abiding interest in objects, by simultaneously embracing the form and formlessness, as well as her longstanding curiosity about how material things are classified according to language—and image-based systems. In this sense, her subjects are the aesthetic function itself—that is, the impulse to generate meaning through formal comparisons of similarity and difference—and the permeable, ever-shifting boundary between what is familiar and what is not.

Cornaro's new series of sculptures, of which are presented here *Untitled (P#5)* and *(P#6)*, quote the geometric forms of Minimalism and make direct reference to exhibition and commercial presentations. With a flourish of sprayed paint, the pedestals are transformed into both display and artwork. From afar, this application of paint has the effect of blurring the boundaries of the object, but upon close inspection the opticality of the sheer, complex, and detailed layers is emphasized. Cornaro has arranged on top of each "pedestal" heaps of jewelry and glass pendants—an accumulation of objects slipped into the language of kitsch and decoration. Noticeably quotidian or imitation, the objects emphasize the unique elevating power of the pedestal at the same time as they quietly perform themselves. Some remind us of the projection of social status while others allude to economic alienation.

The series of works titled *Golden Memories* consist of particulate fields of sprayed paint and silhouettes. The works are byproducts capturing the trace residue from the process of applying paint to *Untitled (P#5)* and *(P#6)*. Despite their seeming aleatory compositional process, coupled with the sculptures, the elevation of both chance and consumer material (carpet) is revealed as highly intentional. By repurposing the carpets, Cornaro grants new life to the remains of a process reminding us that objects can express their purpose after they have been cast aside. In a derived group of works of 2017, some of these "paintings" are also adorned with nickel-casted pendants, as so many fetishes blurring the line between pictorial and sculptural categories.

Cornaro often employs color as an oppressive mask to obscure an immediate rendering of both object and material. This technique is most present in her film work and she uses it alongside a variety of other cinematic effects: fast cuts, tracking, and close-ups that slide over random objects the artist has collected or inherited. Transferred from tactile objects into two-dimensional projections, the process animates, but also alters these objects into something fleeting, desirable, and unobtainable.

Isabelle Cornaro (b. 1974, France) lives and works in Paris and Geneva. She is represented by the galleries Balice Hertling in Paris (since 2008), Francesca Pia in Zurich (since 2013), and Hannah Hoffman in Los Angeles (since 2014). In 2017, she also had solo exhibitions by Simon Lee in Hong Kong and Foksal Foundation Gallery in Warsaw.

Her work has been the subject of numerous international solo exhibitions, including La Verrière / Fondation Hermès, Brussels (2016) ; South London Gallery, London (2015) ; Spike Island, Bristol (2015) ; Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015) ; M-Museum, Leuven, Belgium (2014) ; LA><ART, Los Angeles (2014) ; Thea Westreitch Art Advisory, New York (2014) ; Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (2013) ; Le Magasin, Grenoble (2012) ; FRAC Aquitaine, Bordeaux (2012) ; and Kunstverein Düsseldorf (2009).

Recent group exhibitions include Stories of Almost Everyone, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018) ; All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2017) ; Une brève histoire de l'avenir, Musée du Louvre, Paris (2015) ; Archeo, The High Line, New York (2014) ; Beware Wet Paint, ICA, London (2014) ; One Torino, Palazzo Cavour, Turin (2013) ; Decorum, MAMVP, Paris (2013) ; Triennale, Palais de Tokyo (2012) ; and Vide-poche, SculptureCenter, New York (2011).

Isabelle Cornaro also teaches at the High School for Art and Design (HEAD) in Geneva and is an advisor at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam since 2015. In 2016, she curated the Prix Ricard in Paris.

Public collections: Centre Pompidou, Paris ; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris ; Le Consortium Dijon ; LACMA Los Angeles ; Kunsthalle Bern ; GAMEC, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo.