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ISABELLE CORNARO

March 20th – May 7th 2010

Opening: Saturday March 20th from 5 – 9 pm

For her first solo show at the gallery, Cornaro continues her investigation into how the act of representation endows objects with value. While in her previous series *Moulages sur le vif (vides - poches)* [Ad hoc molds (empty pockets)], 2009, she directly scanned piles of objects, here she molds them through a mechanical process as desubjectified as that of scanning. Four works, each entitled *Homonymes (1,2,3 and 4) 2010*, present generic gray plaster casts of tables displaying mostly mass produced items. One table holds figurative objects, many whose form tautologically repeats their function. For example, a terrine represents a rabbit used to serve rabbit and a vase takes the shape of flower stems. Objects adorned with decorative patterns in bas-relief sit on the second table. The third table presents tools, e.g., rulers and pedestals with geometric forms, and the last table, hung on the wall, holds miscellaneous items. Most of the objects were not cast individually but were molded along with the table into one formless heap of material. Like her *Moulages sur le vif*, the objects are lumped together in disorderly clusters.

On the walls, are projected three films whose flat vibrant colors and movement contrast with the still dull materiality of the 3D casts. The subject of each film self-reflectively mirrors the cinematic process. *Film-lampe* [Film-lamp] 2010 registers oscillating lightbulbs. *Floues et colorées* [Blurred and colored] 2010 frames the amorphous patches of color emanating from cans of spray paint. In *De l'argent filmé de profil et de trois quarts* [Money filmed from a side view and a three-quarter view] 2010 bills and coins are observed from a point of view that without metaphor or allusion corresponds to its title.

The Platonic tradition considers an image authentic if it resembles the object that it represents. Cornaro subverts this subordination of copy to model. "Homonym" designates words that although identical in spelling or pronunciation, differ in meaning. While the artist's homonyms produce effects of similitude, they refer only to themselves and are, thus, fundamentally unique. As such, intensive qualities appear alongside their meanings and functions dependent on language and social conventions. Once cast, the rabbit terrine and the ruler are stripped of their use value becoming an unformed gray primordial soup of texture and mass. Once filmed, the money loses its exchange value becoming psychedelic abstractions. No longer determined solely by the values of intelligible representation, these objects regain their base materiality and pure sensate qualities.

Isabelle Cornaro (b. 1974, France) has exhibited internationally since 2005. She has had solo shows at *La Ferme du Buisson*, Noisiel in 2008, Kunstverein Düsseldorf in 2009 and will have solo shows at Centre d'art contemporain de Troyes in 2010 and Frac Aquitaine, Bordeaux in 2011. Recent group shows include *Nouvelles Acquisitions*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, *Prisonniers du soleil* Le Plateau – Frac Ile de France and *X initiative*, Dia Center, New York. This year, she will participate in a show at the Tate Modern and *Strings Attached* at Raven Row, London. Cornaro lives and works in Paris.

Text: Zoe Stillpass