

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: Eileen Quinlan, *Photographs*

Dates: October 21 – December 9, 2007

Reception: Sunday, October 21, 6:30 – 9 PM

For her first exhibition at Miguel Abreu Gallery, Eileen Quinlan presents the most recent of an ongoing series of photographs titled *Smoke & Mirrors*. As the title of the series suggests, the logic of this work is divided between the rhetoric of a popular skepticism about the verity of the representational image, and the lack of a descriptive capacity regarding its material reality. That something is being obfuscated is asserted, but what that thing is seems to exist out of our frame of reference: things here are frustratingly present in a state of perennial obscurity.

Ms. Quinlan sets up a restricted frame for the production of the fractured images that make-up *Smoke & Mirrors*. Using medium to large format negatives with no digital intervention allows for slight details – the rough edge of a glass plane, some settling dust – to suggest a provisional clarity in the tell of an antiquated trick. The light of an amateur illusionist indexes the returning materiality of these images. As Quinlan seems to point to through a recurrent, outmoded fashion vernacular, these images cannot help but reflect upon the vulnerability of an increasingly totalized image world.

Similarly, Quinlan's work involves an ambivalent engagement with concrete photography's aspirations toward an abstraction tantamount to the modernist avant-garde in more traditional media. The absorption of apparently non-representational photographic procedures into advanced image culture seems to complicate, if not annul, the validity of Quinlan's recourse to the tropes of dynamic composition. Specifically addressing the latter, advertising is suggested in the scale and lighting of these images, but one consigned to obsolescence through more advanced forms of digital imaging. One imagines that these are more the neglected products of stock photography, withdrawn from distribution, blown-up and framed without the stamp of investor confidence.

Quinlan's self-enforced poverty of means suggests that these optical refractions are more the result of accumulated rubble than an effective screen for a consumerist fantasy image.

Like the frustration of Marcel Proust's narrator at the effacement of his object of optical desire in his approach to kiss the cheek of Albertine; or Freud's fetishist, in his confounded enjoyment of a glint/glance on the nose: fragments alternatively efface and fill-in for unstable objects. In the case of the first, we find the frustration of visual pleasure; and in the second, a supplement to a misapprehended lack. This oscillation of the object from optical pleasure to excessive impediment seems to constitute the texture of Quinlan's images, marking a ghost body from which the image derives at the point of its withdrawal.

— Dr. U. Ecker

Eileen Quinlan will be also contributing work to *Image Coming Soon*, organized by Karin Schneider on view at Orchard, 47 Orchard Street from Sunday, October 12 to November 11, 2007. www.orchard47.org

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery:

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Gallery hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 11:00 AM to 6:30 PM

Subway: F to East Broadway; B, D to Grand Street or J, M, Z to Delancey / Essex Street

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