Francesca DiMattio

Bloemenhouder and Kandelaar
10 October - 17 November 2012

Private View: Tuesday 9 October, 6-8pm
Champagne Brunch: Saturday 13 October, 9.30am-12pm

Tom Morton in conversation with Francesca DiMattio: Thursday 11 October, 5.30-6.30pm

Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is delighted to present young New York artist Francesca DiMattio's first solo exhibition in Europe from 10 October to 17 November 2012, and her first showing in London since her large scale canvases were seen in Saatchi Gallery's Abstract America in 2009. Bloemenhouder and Kandelaar offers us the opportunity to see DiMattio's vibrant and painterly sculptures standing on their own, showing the vitality and eccentricity of the large-scale ceramic pieces she has been developing over the past two years.

DiMattio's paintings have often made reference to feminine craft techniques such as sewing, weaving or quilt making. In an attempt to shift the assumption that these crafts are most often delicate or small-scale domestic creations, she scales them up and uses a rougher, more masculine hand. Keeping with an interest in domestic craft, it is fitting that her sculptures are formed from ceramic. Using a material deeply ingrained in rules, craft and history, she turns it on its head by irreverently pulling from its history and pairing extravagant reference with crude slabs marked by fingers and punch marks.

In this exhibition, DiMattio investigates the history of porcelain to examine the ways in which visual iconography moves through culture. She looks at how porcelain's visual history is one of copies, fakes and re-makes; how a revered technique such as the blue and white design found on a Ming Vase was copied by the English, Dutch and French, morphing and changing slightly through each iteration, and can now be found on a kitsch object in a gift shop. Like her paintings, the sculptures here juxtapose conflicting historical references, from 18th century English Wedgwood, French Rococo and Ming Dynasty to kitsch animal figurines. These are grafted objects, fusing disparate elements into a curious new whole. Each piece is made completely as one, rather than from found forms put together after the firing. The different passages affect one another, with glaze from one element interrupting, transforming and connecting multiple facets of the same sculpture.

DiMattio's new work incorporates bases and handles of various forms, from gilded heaps of clay to delicately sculpted adorning flowers. Bases of piled up clay are reminiscent of Chris Ofili's elephant dung, whilst a slumping torso-like coil pot seems on the verge of collapse. Debris made by sculpting animalia has been collected and put on the adjacent surface, creating a rough texture made of dust, chunks and trimmings, and elements in high gloss sit next to bright matte colour. DiMattio creates unstable and shifting objects that are a combination of various logics of taste. In Cuvette à Tombeau, one moment the china-painted landscape is beautiful and the bright rough-textured yellow feels broken, crude or flawed, and on a second look, the texture becomes vibrant and rich, whilst the landscape becomes something you might find in a thrift shop. The changeability of taste is heightened

and examined through DiMattio's uncanny pairings that ask the viewer to look closely at and interrogate these new abstract and de-hierarchised forms.

Francesca Di Mattio's other recent solo exhibitions include those at the ICA, Boston; The Suburban, Chicago; Salon 94, New York, Portugal Arte 10; and Locust Projects, Miami. She has also been part of major group and survey exhibitions recently at venues including the Saatchi Gallery, London; Cluj Museum, Romania; Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw: 5th Prague Biennial; Casey Kaplan Gallery, New York; Tanya Bonakdar, New York; and New Jersey Museum of Contemporary Art.

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-4.
For information or images, please contact Claire Nichols on +44 (0)20 7734 7760 or claire@houldsworth.co.uk

Also currently showing:

DANIEL ARSHAM, The Box
10 October - 17 November 2012

Upcoming:

KIRSTINE ROEPSTORFF, Main Gallery
23 November 2012 - 12 January 2013

OLAF BREUNING, The Box
23 November 2012 - 12 January 2013