

For Immediate Release:

VALENTIN CARRON

Aurore

303 Gallery, 525 W 22nd St.

February 28 – April 11, 2009

Opening Reception Saturday February 28, 6:00 – 8:00 pm



303 Gallery is proud to present our first exhibition of new work by Valentin Carron. Using formal tropes and material displacement to question art's utility and place in the public sphere, Carron creates works whose stark graphics belie a succinctly intellectual approach.

A series of bas-reliefs are inspired by a group of steel sculptures affixed to the facade of an insurance company office. The original pieces by post-futurist Remo Rossi illustrate such traditional work activities as hunting, fishing and ironwork. Painstakingly recapturing the steel details in resin and fiberglass, each of Carron's re-contextualized copies are given titles that substitute the gamut of modern human emotion for the romanticized antiquity of the prototypes. The concepts of intolerance, contempt, cynicism and snobbery are invoked in a flippant rejection of the authoritative values of an artisanal nobility. The use of resin and fiberglass as materials also signals a proclamation of intent, with modern synthetics crudely approximating the austere shine of the polished steel originals. The caustic nature of their material composition is not immediately apparent, paralleling the underlying emotions referenced in each piece's title.

Carron works along similar lines with "Clair Matin" ("Clear Morning"), a sprawling piece installed in the back gallery. What is in essence a formulaic copy of a pergola in a typical Swiss chalet is turned sinister in its execution and placement. The somber black polystyrene stands in for the typical burnished and warmly stained wood, hanging over the viewer as an almost threatening, claustrophobia-inducing presence. The suspended beams hang from the ceiling, forms removed from their banality, becoming menacing reminders of the problems which figuratively "hang over one's head" in day-to-day life. Material-substitution again plays a large role in an untitled pair of nail-clippers rendered in pure gold. Imparting an archaic opulence to a hygienic object, Carron in effect removes all value from the object except that of its materials, as the gold itself prevents the object from accomplishing the utility it was designed for.

Valentin Carron has had solo shows at Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris; Kunsthalle Zurich, Switzerland and the Swiss Institute, New York. His work was included in "The Third Mind", Palais de Tokyo, Paris; "The Freak Show", Musee d'Art Contemporain, Lyon, France; "The Happiness of Objects", Sculpture Center, New York and "In den Alpen", Kunsthhaus Zurich, Switzerland. In 2009, he will participate in group shows at ReMap KM2, Athens, Greece and Contemporary Art Space "The Cannery", Ceuti, Spain. Carron lives and works in Romandie, Switzerland.

303 Gallery represents the work of Doug Aitken, Laylah Ali, Valentin Carron, Anne Chu, Thomas Demand, Inka Essenhigh, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Ceal Floyer, Karel Funk, Maureen Gallace, Tim Gardner, Rodney Graham, Mary Heilmann, Jeppe Hein, Karen Kilimnik, Florian Maier-Aichen, Nick Mauss, Mike Nelson, Kristin Oppenheim, Djordje Ozbolt, Eva Rothschild, Collier Schorr, Stephen Shore, David Thorpe, and Jane and Louise Wilson.

303 Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10 am - 6 pm. For further information please visit us at www.303gallery.com or contact Lisa Spellman, Mari Spirito or Barbara Corti.