

James Carl

JALOUSIE AND OTHER WORKS

March 1 to March 31, 2012

Please join TrépaneirBaer for the opening reception
Thursday, March 1 from 6 to 8 pm.

Artist in attendance



James Carl
thing's end, 2008
Polymerized clay, life-size replicas of rubber bands
Installation dimensions variable
Photo: Courtesy James Carl

In 2008 Montréal based artist Luanne Martineau (TrépaneirBaer) and Chicago based curator Shannon Stratton organized an exhibition titled *Reskilling* for the Western Front in Vancouver. The exhibition featured work by eight artists including Liz Magor, Damian Moppett and Anne Sew Hoy. The premise of the exhibition was that late 20th and early 21st century post-studio practices and high production value art had "...brought to a close the slow deskilling of studio practice and with it a degradation of work and a suspicion of craft and a premium on time." Through deskilling, studio mastery became synonymous with tedium and a lack of intellectual rigor that in the end the curators believed "*distanced modernism from labour all together.*" Martineau and Stratton put forth the thesis that today, younger artists are reinvestigating the notion and value of labour and of craft in the spirit of 19th century crafts movements, and are incorporating craft techniques and mediums into their art practices as a type of vernacular language and as a critique of "*the post - digital, consumerism... and globalism.*"

For nearly twenty years Toronto based sculptor James Carl has been crafting small and large-scale sculptures from a wide variety of materials ranging from cardboard and marble to most recently, venetian blinds. The notions of craft and labour have been at the root of his studio practice and have set the conceptual framework for his work that ranges from powerful and ironic critiques of globalization and consumerism to celebrations of early and mid 20th century modern sculpture.

In the early 1990's the artist crafted elaborately constructed replicas of expensive consumer goods (washing machines, stoves and fridges) out of inexpensive found cardboard, only to place them back onto the street and alleys amongst the original and discarded objects he used as his models. Later he carved, out of marble, replicas of disposable electronics, and now, with his most recent work, he is constructing small and large-scale amorphous sculptures out of venetian blinds. They are extraordinary feats of engineering and of imagination. Woven in the manner of baskets, these fantastic works pay homage not only to the work of early modern sculptors like Brancusi and Moore (with a healthy dose of Duchampian irony and humour) but also to the history of craft and the hand made. Carl could easily have been included in the Martineau/Stratton exhibition *Reskilling*; he has been at the forefront of the "movement" for nearly a quarter of a century.

James Carl earned his MFA from Rutgers University and has degrees from McGill, the University of Victoria and the Central Academy of Fine Art in Beijing. His work is in public and private collections across North America and Europe. Currently, he is an Associate Professor of Studio Art at the University of Guelph. Carl lives in Toronto.

TrépaneirBaer is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of works by James Carl in Western Canada.

■■ TrépaneirBaer

TrépaneirBaer Gallery, #105, 999 - 8 Street S.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2R 1J5
www.trepaneirbaer.com E info@tbg1.com T 403.244.2066 Tuesday - Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.