



## Ian KIAER

May 6-June 19, 2010 opening reception Thursday May 6, 6-8pm

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Ian Kiaer. In a series of minimal, yet highly articulated and textured pieces that comprise his fourth solo show with the gallery, Kiaer continues his practice of combining architectural models, painting, found objects and two-dimensional elements to create precisely composed and subtly evocative tableaux. Referencing utopian movements and visionary figures from the history of art, architecture, science, philosophy and literature, much of Kiaer's work draws from prior research, and for this new presentation, the artist takes Alexandre Dumas' 19<sup>th</sup> century novel, *The Black Tulip*, as a point of departure. Expanding on motifs present in Dumas' story, Kiaer's new works unfold across the walls and floor of the gallery in fragmented visual narratives. A mended floral table cloth is installed in relation to a modular glass house structure, a painting of marks and smears hovers above a soiled pillow—through these conjunctions, Kiaer explores notions of artifice, production and poesis, using the way that these themes appear in Dumas' novel as a prompt for his own investigations.

Set amidst political turmoil in 17<sup>th</sup> century Holland, *The Black Tulip* tells of the attempt to cultivate an impossibly hued flower, and accordingly different chromatic registers play an important role. Kiaer follows this thread in his own work—specifically addressing the notion of black and its ability to represent materiality and substance, while also suggesting absence. In "Dumas project: black tulip/rings," Kiaer contrasts a swath of shiny black cloth with a subtle painting on white taffeta. On the floor beneath these elements a cross section of a hive-like structure compliments a rectangle of tissue paper, and a pair of uneven rubber rings. Balancing dark objects with lighter elements and synthetic materials with organic forms, in this work Kiaer examines how color, or its denial, is perceived and experienced.

While each of Kiaer's works exists autonomously they all respond to one another, and to the space in which they are installed. In an exhibition otherwise concerned with rendering the absence of color, "Dumas project: yellow offset" provides a single colored gesture; a counterpoint to the varying tonal gradations found in the other works.

The specific placement of the elements that comprise each work is just as important as their color—objects are precisely arranged in a manner that seems to suggest a three-dimensional rendering of a traditional still life. Indeed, throughout his presentation Kiaer focuses on specific formal and thematic elements associated with this genre of painting as a 'minor' form. In "Dumas project: bud" he distills the concern to its most direct presentation of an object on a horizontal plane, showing a simple stone, a dense bud, a still weight, a presence that both invites and resists attention.

Kiaer will have a solo exhibition this summer at the Kunstverein Munich, which opens June 10 and will be on view through August 15. Other recent notable shows for the artist include a solo presentation at the Galleria Civica D'Arte Moderna in Turin in the fall of 2009; Comma 15, Bloomberg Space, London, 2009 (solo); The Spectacle of the Everyday: The 10th Lyon Biennale, Lyon, France, 2009 (group); Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War: 10th International Istanbul Biennial,

Istanbul, 2007 (group); Poor Thing, Kunsthalle Basel, 2007 (group); Of Mice and Men, 4th Berlin Biennale of Contemporary Art, 2006 (group); and Ian Kiaer, British School at Rome, 2005 (solo); among others.