

sobering

87, rue de Turenne 75003 Paris

+ 33 (0)9 66 82 04 43

www.soberinggalerie.com

contact@soberinggalerie.com

## Press release

### ***Fragmenter le réel***

**To fragment reality**

**Duo show**

**Alexandra Hopf / Luke Dowd**

**March 17 - April 23, 2016**

**Sobering Galerie**

To fragment reality (*realis, res, « chose/thing »*), to mislead the immediacy of *percept*, here is the common trait between Alexandra Hopf's and Luke Dowd's works.

Escaping the facade, scrubbing superficiality of the first glance, the viewer runs the risk of stepping into constituent otherwise characteristic layers of their respective works.

In Alexandra Hopf's work, the accumulation constructs the material : the artist proceeds by stratifying the texture, implying a depth effect.

In turns, she assembles carbon papers, paints with acrylic, gouache, oil pastel, suggesting the realization steps of her work through a skillfully orchestrated aesthetics of concealment.

The visible surface carries the significant weight of the lower « screens » absence, besides, the artist does not hesitate to scratch the upper layer with a fine metal stylus to make the hidden surfaces appear. The almost engraved striations echo a palimpsest on which the background merges with the visible surface.

The choice of carbon paper sets a temporal perspective : this dated material, whose production is on the verge of discontinuation, has long been replaced by the processes of photocopying and digital text programs.

Hopf attaches importance to the absence, understood as the hidden part of the work : she partially conceals Stella's Black paintings,

pays tribute the Nouveau réalisme (new realism) artist Raymond Hains, or to Giacometti's essay « *The Dream, the Sphinx and the Death of T.* »

The analytical approach of reality is organized, in Dowd's work, through a composition which simulates instantaneousness : isolating a detail from a whole or reconstructing a whole from details. Under an apparent every day life representation, the raw material of his studio environment becomes an abstract composition, a meeting point between a tangible object and references to pop art and minimalism. A line, a shadow, a geometrical shape, are as much superimpositions as reworkings which complete and enhance his visual language. In his previous works, Dowd used screen printing and spray painting, manual and physical changes, while in his new series, the artist works on Photoshop his original medium, the photographic material, highlighting his transition from analog to digital. Luke Dowd creates emotional spaces and celebrates the places where changes occur : his stove, his work table...

Hopf's and Dowd's approaches could be compared not only in the way they deal with their original medium - concealed or altered -, their respective works share common reflections about the concept of authenticity and reproduction.

Considering Hopf's work, there is a confusion between the carbon paper, inherent symbol of reproduction and the original painting made by the artist, between the faithful reproduction of Frank Stella's patterns and her attempt to conceal them, or between the inspiration of Hains's surfaces and the repetition of a single motif.

As for Dowd, the artist casts doubt on reproducibility through the initial photographic material, which becomes unique by the artist's action.

Hopf and Dowd, whose techniques are quite different, build series of interwoven images. The visible surface, at least the most apparent one, becomes an excuse to discover the characteristics of its uniqueness : one artist conceals the layers, the other one enhances the image, both reveal the original material itself.