

Alisha Kerlin

Cat and Mouse

Saturday May 22nd - Sunday June 27th 2010

Opening reception Saturday May 22nd 7-10 PM

For Immediate Release:

Real Fine Arts is pleased to present new work by Alisha Kerlin. The exhibition will run from Saturday May 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010. This will be Kerlin's second solo show in New York, her first with Real Fine Arts. Concurrently, the artist is included in Greater New York, 2010, at MoMA PS 1, LIC, NY, and Beside Himself – Exhibiting Male Anxiety, at Ditch Projects, Springfield, Oregon. Please join us for an opening reception Saturday May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010, from 7 – 10 PM.

For this exhibition, Kerlin has made a series of paintings depicting failed games of Solitaire. The series is based upon actual games, which the artist lost, photographed, and then painted. In this curious approach, the autonomous nature of painting is called into play. Kerlin's project makes a comparison between the series of moves involved in the game of Solitaire and the painterly moves made in the studio. Choosing to paint the unsuccessful games, Kerlin invites a dialog surrounding the notion of a stalemate. In short, the artist makes failure into a new kind of sport.

In addition, Kerlin will present an ongoing series of digital prints, each with it's own group of frames, depicting a single living subject; a sleepy Bare Eyed Cockatoo, which has been living at a pet store on the upper west side for the entire year that the artist has been photographing it. Each print presents a "set" or "group" with its own feeling: The bird is waking up, or falling asleep; caught in a loop that the artist has purposefully presented out of sequence. As with the paintings, these images begin to uncover the mysterious space between inspiration and execution, sinking deeper into a narrative of potentially conflictive reads, which becomes a central theme of the exhibition.

Cat and Mouse posits a conflict in which neither party can win. Kerlin implicates the viewer in the process of creating meaning. The viewer stands in for the player or mouse, just as the works become the cat, and vice versa. The mouse is asked to reflect on the logjam that is built into the formal and contextual foundation of the work. The lonesome activity that is suggested by Solitaire, and the solitary presentation of the bird, creates a situation that invites the viewer to become an active participant. In this way, autonomy as a theme begins to dissolve.

Having played the paintings before their making, and photographed the bird before remixing, Kerlin takes her source material into a new sphere with the alterations she makes in the studio. With this in mind, the artist describes her paintings as follows:

*Choosing to paint a lost game of Solitaire is hard to understand, but it allows for all the decisions within the making of the painting to become blatant. This leaves a lot of space for what is not Solitaire. Symbols slip and overlap each other, the card stacks convert into shapes, and color can disconnect from its source as it attaches to a more perceptual space. The cards are painted as if they are on a table, but are not situated in any particular narrative space or mood, so as to project outward as if they have an extroverted point of view. The viewer stands in for the player. While looking at the paintings there is a slow moment of recognition, not unlike the realization while playing, that the game is unrecoverable—double checking, wondering about the choices that were made, and contemplating what is not shown.*

Alisha Kerlin has previously had a solo exhibition at Repetti Gallery, Long Island City, NY. Her work has been featured in numerous group shows. She graduated from Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, with an MFA in 2008. For information or images please contact the gallery.