

## Rachel Whiteread

18 September – 13 November 2010

The Galerie Nelson-Freeman is pleased to present recent sculptures and new drawings by the English artist Rachel Whiteread.

Over the past twenty years, through redefining traditions of Minimal and Conceptual art, Rachel Whiteread has created an influential body of sculpture which explores the themes of absence and memory through the manipulation of architecture and space. Using industrial materials such as plaster, resin, and rubber, she often creates casts that reproduce the interior spaces of familiar objects, revealing unfamiliar negative spaces in which emptiness takes on a material presence and what was once invisible acquires a palpable shape. The molded shapes originate from everyday objects (a bed, a house, a box, a bathtub, interior space), yet the materials' presence, and sometimes transparency, can give these sculptures as much a ghostly dimension as a profound presence.

For her first exhibition at Galerie Nelson-Freeman, Rachel Whiteread presents a series of sculptural works in which intimately-scaled casts in resin and pigmented plaster are grouped into still lifes; the familiar and ordinary objects of the kitchen cupboard and bathroom cabinet (cardboard tubes, food and medicine packages, fragments of packing materials) recombined into their own new landscape. New in these works is a strong presence of color, which explores a wide range of subtlety; most works are on the wall, though one free-standing sculpture, *Ghost, Ghost 1*, is a transparent polyurethane cast of a doll's house, a domestic memorial dedicated to childhood, and an echo to the shift of scale from the monumental to the intimate that defines this exhibition.

Whiteread's works on paper are also central to her work — according to the artist, "My drawings act as a diary of my work"<sup>1</sup>— and while rarely exhibited in the past, the Nelson-Freeman exhibition will be one of the first exhibitions to show sculpture and drawings together. Included will be an important new series of drawings, *Postcard studies*, created from postcards collected on her travels that show houses or churches against a background of countryside. The images are then reworked using white gouache and a hole punch, obliterating the "fact" of the image while somehow leaving the integrity of the forms, almost creating an abstract *Memento mori*.

Rachel Whiteread was born in London in 1963 and continues to live and work there. A large number of exhibitions have been dedicated to her work in the most prestigious international institutions such as the Serpentine Gallery (London) in 2001, The Guggenheim Museum (New York) in 2002, the MADRE (Naples) in 2007. She has received numerous awards including the celebrated Turner Prize (1993) and has been chosen for a number of important public commissions: *House* (London, 1993), *Water Tower* (New York, 1998), *Holocaust Memorial* (Vienna, 2000). Her work is present in many public collections such as the MoMA (New York), the Tate Modern (London), the Stedelijk van Abbemuseum (Eindhoven) and the Pompidou Centre (Paris).

From September 2010 to January 2011, Tate Britain, in London, presents the final venue of a travelling retrospective of works on paper, after the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles) and the Nasher Sculpture Center (Dallas).

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<sup>1</sup> Allegra Pesenti, "Like Shallow Breath: Drawings by Rachel Whiteread", *Rachel Whiteread Drawings*, Hammer Museum & DelMonico Books, Prestel, Los Angeles, 2010, p.9.