

Stefana McClure

Secrets & Lies

March 31 - May 7, 2011

Opening Reception: Thursday March 31, 6 to 8 pm

Josée Bienvenu Gallery is pleased to present "Secrets & Lies", Stefana McClure's sixth solo exhibition in New York. Fragmentation, obliteration and reconstruction of information characterize McClure's work. Texts, in the form of declassified government documents and Internet searches are sliced and rejoined as continuous lengths of paper yarn and are then knitted. Translating, transposing and decoding the synesthetic structure connecting text and image, Stefana McClure unveils and reveals the fabric of secrets and lies that we are subjected to on a daily basis.

The exhibition includes a series of six drawings made from documents relating to "enhanced interrogation techniques" including water boarding of prisoners in CIA custody. These heavily redacted documents, obtained and released by the American Civil Liberties Union under the Freedom of Information Act, are available as PDF files on the Internet. The deeply disturbing documents are presented as hand-knit reconstructions.

Other knitted drawings showcase more unsavory information: *Manner of Death: Natural*, presented folded on a platform, is a paper shroud created from hundreds of pages of autopsy and death reports of detainees held in U.S. facilities in Iraq and Afghanistan and killed in US custody. Elsewhere Zoloff and Lipitor, which feature among the top 20 side effect searches on drugs.com, are the subjects of two drawings entitled *Possible side effects may include...*

The exhibition also features a group of new "Films on Paper", a body of work McClure has been developing over the past fifteen years. Made of transfer paper mounted on Di-bond, the drawings are minimal compositions of two blurred lines at the bottom of a monochromatic field and consist of the superimposition of the subtitles or closed captions of an entire movie. The films represented include *Secrets & Lies: closed captions to a film by Mike Leigh*, *Nobody Knows: English subtitles to a film by Hirokazu Kore-eda*; *Suspicion: closed captions to a film by Alfred Hitchcock*, *Rashomon: English subtitles to a film by Akira Kurosawa* and *The Crying Game: closed captions to a film by Neil Jordan*.

Osamu Tezuka's *Atom Boy* (a nuclear-powered, yet peace-loving, boy robot) also makes an appearance in the form of three super-concentrated manga dialogue drawings. Atom Boy was among the many attempts in Japanese pop culture to exorcise the fear of nuclear catastrophe that is unfolding today in real-life, reality catching up with fiction. *Whatever you say, say nothing*: a poem of protest by Seamus Heaney takes the form of two text wrapped stones, ready to be thrown, while the world of make believe is represented in *Rapunzel*, a fairy tale told through a knitting Nancy.

Born in Lisburn, Northern Ireland, in 1959, Stefana McClure lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Her work is currently featured in *Drawn/Taped/Burned: Abstraction on Paper* at the Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah, NY. Recent exhibitions include: *Wünsche und Erwerbungen*, Zeitgenössische Zeichnung, Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany (2010); *ALL OVER THE MAP*, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI (2009); *BLOWN AWAY*, Krannert Art Museum, University of

Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL (2008); *Uncoordinated: Mapping Cartography in Contemporary Art*, Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati, OH (2008); *Leaded: The Materiality and Metamorphosis of Graphite* (traveling to 7 University Museums) (2008-2009). Her work is included in numerous public collections including: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, MA; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; The Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Germany; Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT ; and Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA.