

Distressed Blonde

Gail Stoicheff

1 — 29 March 2015

New York, March 1, 2015 – Catinca Tabacaru Gallery presents *Distressed Blonde*, an exhibition of 13 white rabbits, one Phoenix, a handful of medium-sized paintings and two large-scale works exploiting crushed velvet. This marks Stoicheff's first solo exhibition in New York as well as the gallery's first show with the Brooklyn-based painter.

Stoicheff is a material alchemist with two broken fingers. In her hands, base elements of linen, velvet, gypsum, dye and oil paint are transformed into an unknown alloy. Like a heavy case of *j'aurais vu*, she conjures weirdness from the familiar through quasi-magical imagery, mysterious surfaces and small cast objects. The work is simultaneously serious and playful, often calling into question which is which—cute becomes ominous, common becomes strange.

The pieces presented here are visually bountiful. The large works evoke flags of imaginary countries with questionable ideologies or leftover artifacts from a commune that has collapsed into a cult. Her manipulations of canvas manifest trompe-l'oeil cave walls and dark sacred geometry one moment then French toile and bright hippie mysticism the next. Upon these, marks of the painting process—brush wiping, color testing—left to coexist with intentional gestures elicit an atmosphere of defacement and adornment at once. Small rabbits cast in Hydrocal or painted in oil populate the gallery, leaning against or sitting aloft larger works, inviting us to follow them down the rabbit hole that is Stoicheff's eclectic practice.