

Press Release

Vleeshal is pleased to present Routine Pleasures, the first solo institutional exhibition in the Netherlands by Melissa Gordon (b. 1981, Cambridge, USA), running from April 10 to June 19 at Vleeshal Markt.

Melissa Gordon's practice is centred upon an ongoing investigation into the politics of abstraction and the intimacies within artistic processes. In her work as a painter, printmaker and editor Gordon often draws on source materials she considers "by-products" of history—from the modernist grid structure to the traces of painterly residue found in her artist studio—magnifying pictorial elements, emphasising patterns, and distorting information to uncover hidden structures. In doing so, Gordon's works make reference to both the gestural traditions of abstract expressionism and the mechanical procedures of reproducibility distinctive to modernism.

The selection of works on display in Routine Pleasures come from Gordon's "Material Evidence" series; mimetic representations of unintended marks—such as paint spills and smeared brush strokes—found on the walls, floors and surfaces of her artist studio. Gordon blows-up, zooms-in on and crops these accidental gestures before carefully reproducing them in acrylic on canvas; replacing her own initial carelessness with a purposeful and studied imitation: a routine pleasure. Exhibited in the gallery the works stand as proof of the artist's labour in the studio, an effect that is amplified by their hanging on unfinished gallery walls—themselves a reference to technologies of production and display. Presented together in horizontal series, the works also reveal a photographic relationship to each other, as if seen from the eye of a camera as it pans across a wall and registers its surface information. To this end, Routine Pleasures—which takes its title from a 1986 film by Jean-Pierre Gorin that explores our desire to re-create the past—foregrounds a series of enduring relationships for the artist; the relationship between representation and abstraction, between presence and absence, and between painting and film.

A screening of two films by Jean-Pierre Gorin, Routine Pleasures (1986) and Poto and Cabengo (1980), will take place as part of the exhibition's public programme on Saturday, June 18 starting at 7pm.

Melissa Gordon (b. 1981 in Cambridge, USA) lives and works in London. From 2003 to 2005 she studied at De Ateliers in Amsterdam. Recent exhibitions include: Fallible Space, The Bluecoat, Liverpool, (2016); Derivative Value, Overbeck-Gesellschaft, Lübeck, Germany (2016); WE (Not I), Artists Space, New York (2015); Mimetic Pleasures, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York (2014); During the Exhibition the Studio Will Be Close, Wiels, Brussels (2014); and Material Evidence, Spike Island, Bristol (2013). She is the editor of a series of feminist magazines including LABOUR (2011) and PERSONA (2013), and her upcoming catalogue Painting Behind Itself, co-published by Vleeshal, will be released in June 2016. Gordon is represented by Galerie Juliette Jongma, Amsterdam; Marianne Boesky, New York; Cosar HMT, Düsseldorf; Deweer Gallery, Otegem.

