

# HANNAH HOFFMAN GALLERY

## PRESS RELEASE

ISABELLE CORNARO

JANUARY 26 – MARCH 19, 2016

Opening Reception: January 23, 6-8pm

For her second exhibition with Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Isabelle Cornaro presents a selection of recent works that stage the multiple fractures in our cognitive relationship to objects. With a precise visual syntax, Cornaro uses strategies of translation, abstraction, and composition to generate formal and conceptual contradictions reactivating our sense of perception. Here, the anthropomorphic convenes with the abstruse pinpointing the way meaning is formed through objects and how objects become extensions of self as symbols of class and taste.

At the focal point of the exhibition, Cornaro has installed a large-scale composition of stands and display elements, interspersed with an array of found objects and rolls of velvet fabric. Reminiscent of a classical landscape painting translated into volumes, planes, and perspective markers, the work reveals itself as a static “tableau,” an abstraction of reality, which fragments away as the viewer’s movements through the installation breaks the spatial organization. The objects within the installation are either ornamental or symbolic, eliciting a narrative of fetishism and exchange value that reverberates throughout all the works in the exhibition.

Adjacent to the installation are examples from a series of solid rubber wall-based castings that recall the chaotic structures of 16th and 17th century Mannerist grotto design. The work presents the homogenized mechanical reproduction of individual objects: rope, jewelry, fabric, currency, stone, and chains, each of which maintain its original formal texture amidst its loss of functional status. The work is rendered through a single casting process during which color is added when the material is still fluid. The title, *Orgon Doors*, refers both to an open textual description from Edward Kienholz’s *Concept Tableau* series (*The God Box*) which Cornaro has come to realize in several iterations, and Wilhelm Reich’s concept of “Orgon” energy source.

A different group of works, designated by the artist as “drawings,” features bands of human hair intertwined around thin strips of painted wood board, whose organization stems from the tradition of landscape composition. In this construct, our experience of the material changes as its formal fragility finds a dependency upon the geometric composition that supports it. Unlike the modified process of the castings, the strands of hair are unaltered, allowing for a corporeal experience to surface from the abstract system in which it has been inserted.

Isabelle Cornaro (b. 1974, France) lives and works in Paris and Geneva. Her work has been the subject of numerous international solo exhibitions including South London Gallery, London (2015); Spike Island, Bristol (2015); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015); M-Museum, Leuven, Belgium (2014); LA><ART, Los Angeles (2014); Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (2013); CNAC-Le Magasin, Grenoble (2012); Frac Aquitaine, Bordeaux (2012); and Kunstverein Dusseldorf (2009). Recent group exhibitions include *Une brève histoire du futur*, Musée du Louvre, Paris (2015); *Archeo*, The High Line, New York (2014); *Beware Wet Paint*, ICA, London (2014) and *One Torino*, Palazzo Cavour, Turin (2013); *Decorum*, MAMVP, Paris (2013); *Triennale de Tokyo*, Palais de Tokyo (2012); and *Vide-poche*, SculptureCenter, New York (2011)