

Alexander Gray Associates

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Karen Finley

Drawings from the Bush Administration, 2000–2008

Artissima 15: The International Fair of Contemporary Art in Torino

7–9 November 2008

Lingotto Fiere, Torino, Italy



Mr. President, detail, 2006, ink on paper

ARTISSIMA 15

The International Fair of Contemporary Art in Turin

Alexander Gray Associates is pleased to participate in Artissima 15, with a solo exhibition of works by performance artist and political activist Karen Finley.

With Artissima 15 opening immediately after the United States Presidential election, the gallery is presenting a new interactive installation and a selection of Karen Finley's works on paper made over the past eight years of George W. Bush's presidency. In the installation, viewers are invited to inscribe on the booth's walls the names of those killed in the War on Iraq, creating a collective witness, site for mourning and, ultimately, a call to action. The names of the nearly 150,000 deaths were gathered from internet sources, including www.icasualties.org and www.iraqbodycount.org. Among the works on paper, are reflections on a range of social and political events during Bush's American reign, including 9/11, The War of Iraq, the ascendancy of Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, fictional journals of Laura Bush's dreams, the execution of Saddam Hussein, and Sarah Palin's vice-presidential candidacy.

Stylistically, Finley's drawings bring to mind Impressionist sketchbooks, Andre Breton's Exquisite Corpse drawings during the Dada and Surrealist movements, and Andy Warhol's commercial art-era drawings. Finley's slight of hand and whimsical flourishes counterbalance the political content of the images she appropriates from popular culture.

As part of the Ecole de Stéphanie, curated by Stéphanie Moisdon, Karen Finley will perform Nation Building on Saturday 8 November 2008 at 11:30 AM. This reading/performance looks at the impact of the War on Iraq.

New York-based artist Karen Finley is best known for her riveting and visceral solo performance work, which were at the center of the Culture Wars in the United States of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Using her voice and her body, these performances left an indelible impact on audiences, channeling rage and mourning around the AIDS crisis, violence against women, war, and censorship into personal and emotional expression. Her visual art has been exhibited internationally, and is in the collections of the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. She is the author of numerous books, including *A Different Kind of Intimacy* (Thunder's Mouth Press, 2000) and *George and Martha* (Verso Books, 2006). She has been recognized with an honorary Doctorate degree from the San Francisco Art Institute, two Bessie Awards, an Obie Award, and in 1998 was named Ms. Foundation's Woman of the Year. Finley is currently a professor of Art and Public Policy at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Alexander Gray Associates is a contemporary art gallery and advising firm based in New York. Our exhibition program focuses on mid-career visual artists who emerged in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Through consulting and collection advising, we provide expertise for our individual and corporate clients. Our ultimate goal is to provide a direct experience with Modern and contemporary art that encourages discourse around art's role in the advancement of culture. Gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM.