

For Immediate Release

John Beech and Stephanie Brooks

March 8 to April 26, 2003

Peter Blum is pleased to announce the exhibition, **John Beech and Stephanie Brooks** opening on March 8, 2003 at the Peter Blum Gallery, 99 Wooster Street, New York, NY 10012.

John Beech lavishes attention on random utilitarian objects (containers, dollies, crates, and dumpsters,) all of which were originally made with no aesthetic consideration. Beech has said, "I am interested in fusing the visual vocabulary of utility and abstract art." This he has achieved in part, through the disruption of the function that these utilitarian objects were originally created to perform. This process is illustrated in the current exhibition by a group of works in enamel, ink and polyurethane on black and white photographs of dumpsters in various settings. To each photograph Beech applies a thick coating of enamel paint to the area which contains the dumpster and in so doing endows it with the visual qualities of a painted minimal sculpture.

Another concern for Beech is the life of an art work when it is not displayed, or when it is in the process of being made. Thus, for instance, the container that the work is stored in or what the back of the piece looks like, or even how heavy it is, adds to a sense of "knowing the piece." This grounding in basic physical attributes can be seen in two small glue paintings in the current exhibition. A glue or "size" painting is really what a painting is before the art is applied, but the variation of the color tone which is actually a function of the drying glue, suggests that the surface is more than just a preparation for the painting.

Stephanie Brooks' work is about the written word. It is also deeply involved in defining post-minimalist sculpture.

The language, that concerns Brooks, is that used by institutions of authority and she would like to gently disrupt our comfortable complicity with their subtle directives. Thus, she re-writes the legal forms that we are constantly required to complete and the directional street signs that we are required to obey and, with her humorous turn of phrase, transforms these depersonalizing written requests into emotional statements that address the human condition. Her words are etched into sleek minimalist wall sculptures of enameled zinc or painted poplar.

New work in the exhibition includes a series of etched zinc wall plaques that are painted to look like the bronze signs that businesses typically display to proudly state how long they have been in business. Brooks' plaques, however, record the dates of the onset of specific character traits such as: "Good Intentions Coupled with Bad Judgment, circa 1991," or "Inability to Censor Self, Est.1994."

Says Brooks: "Above all, I am interested in redefining social spaces by inserting subjectivity and humor into impersonal forms and by bringing to the surface the multiple meanings inherent in the language of those forms."

For additional information and photographic material please contact Peter Blum or Diana Erdos

The gallery is located at 99 Wooster Street, New York, NY 10012

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Hours: Tuesday-Friday 10-6, Saturday 11-6, and Monday by appointment

Please turn over.