

Kim Beck Ownership Society



September 7 — October 4, 2009

Artist Talk / Reception: Thursday, September 24, 4pm - 6pm

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Kim Beck and the New Disownership Society

Left. **Foreclosure 1**. 2009. Gouache and Ink on Paper. 12 x 15 inches.

Center. **Foreclosure 2**. 2009. Gouache and Ink on Paper. 12 x 15 inches.

Right. **Foreclosure 3**. 2009. Gouache and Ink on Paper. 12 x 15 inches.

Cover. **Space**. 2009. Charcoal on Paper. 72 x 192 inches.

In the first four years of his administration, George W. Bush now infamously coined the term “Ownership Society” as a philosophical goal whereby Americans, regardless of whether or not they had the economic ability to pay for it, could own property. Fast forward to today, when misguided governance, risky lending, irresponsible borrowing, and Wall Street greed collapsed our economy into a culture of joblessness, homelessness, foreclosures, and unfinished housing complexes. This loaded phrase, “Ownership Society,” serves as the title and foundation for Kim Beck’s most recent foray into the intersection of architecture, sculpture, installation, drawing, and text. Traditionally, Beck’s practice has focused on the overlooked, desolate spaces in the landscape, including the flatly bland terrain of Denver where she grew up, the weeds and cracks in



the sidewalk, or the garish billboards and lonely telephone poles along the highway. Blending an interest in architecture and the landscape with a deep ambivalence towards nondescript, man-made constructions, her work reflects a disdain for the inevitable progress of commercialization as well as an appreciation for the awkward beauty of these same spaces and objects.

In “Ownership Society,” Beck extrapolates this idea to include the ubiquitous: buildings abandoned mid-construction, houses in foreclosure waiting to be reclaimed, and signage indicating businesses closed and store-wide sales of inventory. Perhaps best epitomized in her petite gouache sketches of houses in foreclosure taken from the Web, these smudgy, romanticized images, simply by nature of their material, convey a romanti-

cized melancholy that hints at the darkness of their source. While the nuances of the social and cultural landscape have always played a role in her work, this turn in Beck’s practice reflects a more overtly political stance. At the same time, the fluctuation between abstraction and representation combined with Beck’s gentle and delicately meticulous use of materials imbues her work with an elegantly beautiful artistic aesthetic that belies their disenchanting beginnings.

~Heather Pesanti

Heather Pesanti is Curator of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York

JULIO FINE ARTS GALLERY

Loyola College in Maryland
4501 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

Gallery Phone 410 617 2799

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Gallery Hours

Monday through Friday, 11am – 5pm

Sunday, 1pm – 4pm

Gallery will be closed during all school holidays.

Location and Parking

The Julio Fine Arts Gallery is in the College Center directly north of Jenkins lot and Francis X. Knott Humanities Center.

Paid parking is available in Jenkins lot on Bunn Drive;

free parking is available on Cold Spring Lane after 6pm.