

Shane Campbell Gallery

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For Immediate Release

Alex Olson
Selected Coats
March 3 – April 21, 2012

Opening reception Saturday, March 3, 6 – 8 pm

Shane Campbell Gallery is pleased to announce Alex Olson's first solo exhibition with the gallery in Chicago.

Olson will present a suite of new paintings, each distinct from the other yet sharing an investigation of surface. The show opens with a small painting that functions as a record of the making of the other works: each time the artist touched a wet painting or surface, she would mark her finger onto this painting, in effect creating a calendar of choices. In the proceeding works, Olson employs a variety of strategies to emphasize the surface of the paintings while proposing a range of ways in which they could be read. For some, an architecture of brushwork has been built up, cut away, and then highlighted through a means of scraping and gliding paint across the raised edges of brushstrokes, drawing out the nuances of each mark. The result is a print-like quality in which the paint reads as both material and as sign. In other works, paint is dragged across a textured surface, exposing the embedded marks while creating a competing graphic mark on top. Still others have paint applied in a flatfooted and indexical manner: scraped into ribbon-like gestures, palette-knifed on, or simply recorded with a blunt mark of the brush. While these strategies are repeated, combined, and reworked throughout the show, each painting offers a different viewing experience and interpretation: some hedge towards textile, others towards rocky facades, and others towards the nearly photographic. None land tidily in a particular category and strive to avoid a succinct read. Instead, first impressions give way to renegotiated understandings, as the paintings reveal different information from different distances and angles. These works seek to highlight and prolong the very process by which one encounters and translates surfaces on a daily basis, pointing to how the brain shifts between perception and recognition and intermingles with personal projections.

Alex Olson lives and works in Los Angeles. Olson received her BA from Harvard University and her MFA from CalArts. She has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally with recent group exhibitions at Laura Bartlett Gallery, London and Altman Siegel, San Francisco. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

To obtain additional information please contact Eric Ruschman at the gallery at eric@shanecampbellgallery.com.