

The approach

SOPHIE BUENO-BOUTELLIER

CIRCUS - BERLIN



Sophie Bueno-Boutellier's second solo show at Circus presents 'her kind of paintings.' Technically acrylic on canvas, they are pure fabric — rough, unprepared canvases that have been folded, painted, draped and painted again to create various opacities of white or pale pink. While the square formats balancing on one corner suggest a tip of the hat to hard-edge painting of the '60s, the roughness and simplicity of the surfaces suggest traditions somewhat closer to home — the earthiness of Antoni Tàpies or Arte Povera. The essence of the work is this combination of the minimalist and the material, in which the tactile quality of the wall pieces is offset by the mound of sparkling black sand piled in a corner of each room. Otherworldly and alchemical, the mysterious dust suggests an encounter between opposing forces or properties, in which the title "Les Adorateurs des Bêtes" then begins to play out. But one is not quite sure which are the "beasts," whether they embody the coarse shapes hovering in the whiteness above or the pristine black mineral below.

The substances of *grit* and *air* are combined with a delicate precision that evokes a sense of

some alternate realm or material plane.

There is something rarified about the artist's work, who has been influenced by the "transcendental painting" of Egon von Vietinghoff, a 20th-century Swiss painter. In keeping with modernist notions of the sublime, Bueno-Boutellier's 'paintings' require a pristine space of contemplation to unfold their full effect, and at Circus, a gallery perched above a lot packed with auto repair shops, the world of the everyday tends to intrude on this material transfiguration.

Laura Schleussner



Above: SOPHIE BUENO-BOUTELLIER, *Les Adorateurs des Bêtes*, 2010. Installation view at Circus, Berlin. Left: SOPHIE BUENO-BOUTELLIER, *St. Tropez*, 2010. Acrylic on canvas, 95 x 21 x 16 cm. Both courtesy Circus, Berlin.