Alex Olson

Palmist and Editor

September 9 – October 28, 2012

Opening Reception: Sunday, September 9, 6-8 pm

Lisa Cooley is very pleased to present an exhibition of new paintings by Alex Olson entitled *Palmist and Editor*. This exhibition, which is the artist’s second solo presentation with the gallery, will be on view from September 9th until October 28th. A reception for the artist will be held on Sunday, September 9th from 6 until 8 pm.

Olson’s paintings continue to place emphasis on the surface of the work and the ways in which it can be read. These new paintings circulate around pairings within each canvas that are often similar in their composition but varied in their resulting signs: textured marks sit next to graphic versions of themselves, structural layers weave through external layers, subdued colors overlap with louder counterparts. Fluctuating between corporeal and cognitive, Olson’s work encourages a consideration of both aspects simultaneously and questions how we parse out conflicting sets of information when deciphering a surface.

Trawls, palette knives, window scrapers, and inexpensive brushes create the scaffolding of the works as they abrade, carve, and gouge the paint. Olson chooses tools and techniques that are blunt and direct. Her brushstrokes evolve from “stock signage” - common, versatile forms that avoid one specific meaning. These indexical and familiar marks situate the paintings in a knowable place, one that is of-the-world, yet difficult to precisely name. The combination of these marks suggest something ripping, something accumulating, something overflowing, but that something remains open to the viewer’s interpretation.

Thin stretchers further highlight the surface of the work, creating a specific viewing experience. With such shallow relief, the painting’s surface assumes full focus, muting discussions of painting-as-object or painting-as-architecture, as might occur with more prominent stretchers or when applied directly to the wall. Neither exceptionally large nor exceptionally small, these works declare themselves to be discreet sites of information, presented solely for the exploration and consideration of their surfaces.

Alex Olson lives and works in Los Angeles. She received a BA from Harvard University in 2001, and an MFA from CalArts in 2008. Recent exhibitions include *Made in LA*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Laura Bartlett Gallery, London; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. She will be included in the exhibition *Painter, Painter* at the Walker Art Center in February 2013. Her work is included in the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

Please note the gallery’s new location at 107 Norfolk Street, just one block east of Essex Street between Rivington and Delancey. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, from 10am to 6 pm, and always by appointment. The closest subways are the F/J/M at the Delancey/Essex stop and the D at Grand Street. For more information, please contact Kelly Woods at kelly@lisa-cooley.com or 212-680-0564.