

ELENA DEL RIVERO

*L'oeil d'âme*

January 15 – March 7, 2009

Galería Elvira González is delighted to announce the fourth solo exhibition by Elena del Rivero. *L'oeil d'âme*, produced in 2008, includes works on paper, a series of large format paintings, and three pieces the artist titles *objects*. Del Rivero's work explores domestic spaces, textual images, and innovative mark making.

*L'oeil d'âme*, a title borrowed from philosopher Hélène Cixous, carries multiple meanings: we do not know whether del Rivero's title refers to "the eye of the soul" as the phrase is translated or to "the eye of the lady," as it sounds to the ear in French. The ambiguity points to energizing tensions in del Rivero's work. Her previous work, especially *[Swi:t] Home* (2000-2001), has considered ways linguist shifts and slippages can reflect visual complexities. Writing on the sides of Del Rivero's paintings unites verbal and visual metaphor in compelling ways; *Walk I* and *Walk II* bear fragments of Molly's last soliloquy in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. In *Walk III* and *Walk IV*, the artist eliminates the text, adding only her stamp on one side of the canvas and the simple title on the other side. In this context, the painting's title has the quality of a herald of something yet to come.

In *L'oeil d'âme*, del Rivero draws on her practice of sewing on paper, translating the process to canvas. Brush strokes recall the repetitive rhythm of sewing as the artist metaphorically weaves her new large format, monochromatic paintings. Just as the cloth bearing the stitches is part of a finished piece of embroidery, the execution of del Rivero's paintings allows the priming to be part of the finished works; the visibility of the canvas also calls to mind the intimacy and immediacy of the language of drawing.

The exhibition also includes works on paper. In some cases, the paper has been gilded with 23 karat gold leaf; in others, the purity of the abaca paper is visible through del Rivero's marks and stitches. The artist allows some pieces to bear tears and wounds; these works are just barely held together by del Rivero's stitching. Among the gilded works is a monumental 78 x 78 in. piece that mimics an enormous kitchen dishcloth marked in pure gold. This work captures something of the spirit of the exhibition in its elevation of the domestic to the realm of the sacred, its insistence on the existence of the transcendent within the most common household objects and daily pursuits.

Elena del Rivero lives and works in New York. **The Corcoran Gallery of Art** in Washington presented *Home Suite* curated by Sarah Newman in 2008. **IVAM** and **Patio Herreriano** hosted *At Hand, fifteen years of works on paper* curated by Elizabeth Finch in 2006 -2007. Concurrently, Elena's work has been included in *Nueva York. El papel de las últimas vanguardias* (January 27 to May 24, 2009) at **Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban**

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**Vicente** in Segovia, and *Hilos de modernidad: Tapices y alfombras* (December 26, 2008 to January 31st., 2009) at **Real Fábrica de Tapices** in Madrid

Del Rivero's work is in the collections of IVAM, Baltimore Museum of Art, MoMA, Arkansas Arts Center, Yale University Art Gallery, Atrium, National Gallery of Art, Washington, CGAC, Museo Patio Herreriano, Fogg Art Museum, American Express, Fundació La Caixa, Fundación Coca Cola, Caja-Burgos, Museo Nacional Centro Arte Reina Sofía, Museo de Pamplona, and other museums and private collections.