ALMINE RECH

Tom Burr
Black and Blue

Mar 20 — Apr 19, 2008 | Paris

The Tom Burr exhibition at Galerie Almine Rech is closely related to the one which takes place since January 13th at Sculpture Center in New York.

It is about the same group of works of which, in a way, the first part is the *Addict-Love* exhibition at Sculpture Center and the continuation is *Black and Blue* at Galerie Almine Rech Paris.

In *Addict-Love*, Tom Burr creates a set of abstract tableaux reflecting on modernity: its history, its personalities, and of course, its style. Burr ruminates on figures, moments, and the heady mises en scène that both gave rise to and were shaped by Modernism's powerful ideology. These groupings include elements that are further developments in Burr's repertory of forms. Burr describes his approach to the making of sculptural work as so many acts in a play, or stills in a film. This theatricality and his allegorical use of specific forms of the theater: platforms/stages, railings, curtains, lighting, mirrors, and personal articles that function as sculptural props suggest a history of modernism, and a history of sculpture, as a series of scripted gestures to be performed.

Three figures serve as éminence grise in *Addict-Love*: Frank O'Hara, Chick Austin, and Kurt Weill. The exhibition title is borrowed from a poem by Frank O'Hara. A poet of the New York School, O'Hara was also a curator at the Museum of Modern Art in the early 1960s, and counted among his circle John Ashbery and Jackson Pollock. Chick Austin, Director of the Wadsworth Atheneum 1927 - 1944, was instrumental in introducing European Modernism to the United States (hosting Picasso's first U.S. museum exhibition in 1934) and making Hartford a gathering place for the international intelligentsia including Gertrude Stein, Le Corbusier, Salvador Dali, and George Balanchine. The composer Kurt Weill is important in Burr's subjective history as an émigré whose work spanned Brechtian theater in 1920s Berlin to Tony Award-winning Broadway musicals. For Burr, each of these men embodied the modern of their own era.