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KRISTIN BAKER

SURGE AND SHADOW

MARCH 15 – April 21, 2007
18 WOOSTER STREET

Surge and Shadow, an ambitious exhibition of new work by Kristin Baker, opens on March 15th at Deitch Projects. In this new body of work Baker expands her dialogue with the history of painting beyond the New York School to encompass Nineteenth Century Romanticism and History Painting. Baker forges 21st century paintings from an abrupt collision of 19th and 20th century ideas of painting. In works like *Flying Curve*, *Differential Manifold*, she furthers her exploration of the structure of painting to approach the sculptural.

Just as abstract expressionism pursued a way to suit the literalism of a gesture with the eternal evocativeness of abstract form, Baker combines gestural fragments into an abstract, plastic composition. The New York School selected materials and application methods that suited their contemporaneous goals, and likewise does Baker. As Frank Stella painted right out of the can, admiring the beautiful synthetic palette of industrial paints of their day, Baker uses the new rainbow of

industrial plastics, metal and synthetic polymers. To create a feeling of the human hand as a transcriber of the psyche, abstract expressionists poured, threw, or brushfully pushed their colours around; Baker's updated method of brushless paintings that incorporate plastic paint, PVC support and metal hardware allow her to make contained gestures while capturing the immediacy of the ab-ex style.

Baker's works are not traditional paintings, as her materials consist of plastic polymers, Mylar sheets, PVC, and metal. Even in application Baker uses industrial tools like squeegees or trowels; never brushes. The more sculptural pieces—which can only be described as three-dimensional paintings—are made from the plastic paint residue extruded from her mixing buckets; a microcosm of her large paintings condensed into a nugget of plastic. This new body of work expands upon her vocabulary of collision and explosion, cars, chaos and speed, to break new ground.