

JOHANNES VOGT

GALLERY | NEW YORK

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JOHANNA UNZUETA: “MECHANICAL MOVEMENTS”

JANUARY 10 – FEBRUARY 9, 2013

Mechanical Movements is the first solo show of Johanna Unzueta at Johannes Vogt Gallery in New York. For the exhibition Unzueta has produced a suite of felt sculptures, drawings, and films. Unzueta's entire artistic practice is brought together in one comprehensive exhibition for the first time. With its prop-like sculptures, *Mechanical Movements* produces a theatrical scene of stopped motion. The viewer enters into a temporally fragmented and disorienting setting.

Many of Unzueta's recent sculptures fixate on two basic mechanical parts: the chain and the gear. Unzueta reproduces these components in felt and wood. The shift in material softens the cold replaceability of the metal originals, yet the mechanics still function properly. These sculptures are thus surrogates of the objects they represent. Through the laborious use of craft materials, Unzueta produces frozen shapes that are imbued with the stored time of production.

In the *chain* and *gear* pieces, Unzueta reproduces mechanisms by which energy is transferred. In these works, as well as in her *hinge* pieces, a potential action is encoded, whether it be spinning or folding. The repetition of an action within certain boundaries is similarly thematized in the three film works on display. In these videos, Unzueta meditates on three distinct temporalities. In *Windows*, the camera fixes poetically on the aged windows of an industrial building. In *Red Canister*, a felt container is filled with water in a Sisyphean loop. And in *Whispers*, Unzueta films her son, who rides a bike while carrying one of his mother's felt chains. Unzueta's artistic vocabulary is distinct not only for its tactile visuality, but also for its poetic understatement. By halting these moments of methodical and automatic systems, Unzueta transforms the gallery's space into an experimental and destabilizing environment.

Johanna Unzueta was born in 1974 in Santiago, Chile, and has lived and worked in New York since 2000. Unzueta received her first solo museum show in the US at the Queens Museum in 2009. Her work has been shown in solo and group shows internationally, including presentations at the Museum of Contemporary Art — University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago, Chile; Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, Austria; Or Gallery, Vancouver, Canada; and the S-Files Biennial, El Museo del Barrio, New York.

Since its inception only a year and a half ago, the gallery has taken on a challenging program leading to a change of location in November 2012. Johannes Vogt Gallery is committed to bringing attention to the complex artistic and cultural ties that bind New York to both Europe and Latin America.

Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 am – 6 pm and by appointment

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