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SONYA BLESOFSKY: *TENEMENT*

MAY 5–JUNE 11, 2011
OPENING: THURSDAY, MAY 5, 6–8PM

"The tenement is the basic façade in New York, the face of the slums, a slab of tombstone proportions, four to six stories, pocketed by windows. Above is the towering tin cornice, a confection of scallops and curlicues, with foliaceous brackets, often topped by a semicircular peak, a disk enclosing a rayed sun…It is the most conspicuous item in the tenement's equipment of fictitious grandeur."
—from Low Life by Luc Sante

Mixed Greens is thrilled to announce Sonya Blesofsky's first solo exhibition with the gallery. For *Tenement,* she investigates impermanence, instability, community, history, and preservation through fragile paper sculptures.

For much of her artistic career, Blesofsky has chosen architectural details from her immediate surroundings to produce sculptures that imperfectly summarize a home, a changing community, or a collapse. Each piece is painstakingly constructed despite the impermanence of her delicate materials: tape, aluminum foil, paper, and wax. Façades that will inevitably degrade, as well as the communities that are affected by these degradations, are referenced with a sense of urgency.

For *Tenement,* Blesofsky focuses her attention on apartment buildings in New York City. After reading "NYC's Worst Landlords Watchlist," written by public advocate Bill De Blasio, Blesofsky researched the cited violations and travelled the city, viewing the failing buildings and imagining the tenants within. She was able to appreciate the beauty of the façades' ornamentation, while remaining cognizant that each cornice and pediment disguised A, B, and C housing code violations.

In the front gallery, the viewer will encounter façade details: an awning, gate, and cornice. Each is constructed out of a subtly transparent paper that nearly disappears into the white space of the gallery. In the back gallery, the exterior elements give way to an interior space defined by a sculpted ceiling medallion and sink. Finally, visitors will encounter a constructed basement-like space with exposed plumbing, rat traps, cement blocks, and jerry-rigged electrical wires made of cardboard, brown paper, and aluminum foil. Although the references are concrete and specific, the materials and installation make Blesofsky's work familiar, accessible, and ephemeral, as if from a personal memory.

Sonya Blesofsky has shown extensively since receiving her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2005. Solo exhibition venues include Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco, CA; Plane Space, New York, NY; Gallery Diet, Miami, FL; Cleopatra's, Brooklyn, NY; and Swarm Gallery, Oakland, CA. Group exhibition venues include Weinstein Gallery, Minneapolis, MN; SHO Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, NY; Islip Art Museum, Islip, NY; Transformer Gallery, Washington DC; and Patricia Sweetow Gallery, San Francisco, CA. She has been a studio artist at numerous residencies including the Artists Alliance Lower East Side Studio Program, The Museum of Arts and Design, Smack Mellon, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Swarm Gallery, Dieu Donne Papermill, and Plane Space. Blesofsky grew up in Los Angeles County; she currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

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