

Hendershot Gallery

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BALANCING ACT

Works by MIRIAM CABESSA, GARY KOMARIN and KARYN OLIVIER

October 24 – December 5, 2010

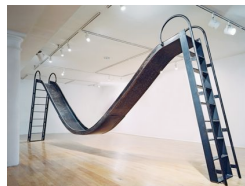
Opening Reception: Sunday, October 24, 6-9pm

October 1, 2010 – New York, NY – Hendershot Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of *Balancing Act*, a group show featuring paintings and performance by **Miriam Cabessa**, paintings and works on paper by **Gary Komarin** and sculptures by **Karyn Olivier**. The exhibition will be open to the public at Hendershot Gallery's new space at 195 Chrystie Street on the Lower East Side from **October 24 until December 5, 2010**, with an opening reception on **Sunday, October 24, from 6-9pm**.

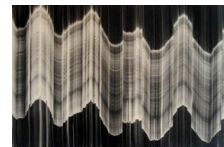
Although vastly different in form and composition, the works included in *Balancing Act* all convey a sense of play, pure physicality, and a connection with archetypal childhood experience. Curator Hamlett Dobbins has written about Gary Komarin that "[he] does in his paintings what acrobats do on the high wire: there is a constant balancing act between sophistication and simplicity, between cartoon-like expression and eloquent abstraction." This notion of interplay between elegant complexity and childlike candor exemplifies the spirit of works in this show. Miriam Cabessa uses a variety of tools, her hands, and pieces of fabric in tandem with the movement of her body and breath to produce abstract paintings. Gary Komarin often includes motifs like cakes and wigs in his paintings, while Karyn Olivier makes large sculptures that allude to typical elements of urban playgrounds like slides, monkey bars, benches, and tetherball poles. There are also strong architectural elements to both Komarin's and Olivier's work: Komarin's stacked cakes series are reminiscent of both ancient coliseums and modern skyscrapers (his father was an architect), while Olivier's minimalist sculptures alternatively simplify (as in *Monkey Bars*) or multiply (as in *Double Slide* and *Tetherball*) the typical forms of playground structures in order to evoke an uncanny sense of nostalgia in the viewer.

Miriam Cabessa was born in Casablanca, raised in Israel, and has been living and working in New York for the past ten years. She represented Israel at the 1997 Venice Biennale, and her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is included in the permanent collections of the Jerusalem Museum and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. By focusing on the rhythm of her breath as she makes her paintings, Cabessa creates patterns that emerge through the discipline of her minimal movements, a meditative technique in which the surface of the painting becomes sensitive to her every move. Cabessa says of her work, "It's a form of action painting that describes a different experience of time." The resulting images have qualities of precise digital work and at the same time act as explorations of human body and touch. Cabessa's intimate physical interactions with the materials lend a performative aspect to the creation of the works. As part of *Balancing Act*, she will create a large-scale painting onsite in the basement of the gallery during the opening reception; the basement will act as "the subconscious" of the gallery space, and Cabessa will paint with a flashlight on her forehead, thereby illuminating only fragments of the canvas at a time, as if "embodying the remnants of a dream." This process will be filmed live and the video subsequently projected on a wall in the basement for the remainder of the show.

Gary Komarin was born in New York City to a Czech architect and a Viennese writer who fled the Holocaust. He studied Art and English at Albany State University and was awarded a graduate teaching fellowship at Boston University, where he assisted the abstract expressionist Philip Guston. Komarin uses quick drying mediums like tempera, water-based enamel, and graphite as well as scratching and on-canvas blending in his abstract paintings. In 2000, the *New York Times* wrote: "Seemingly imprecise in their imagery, austere in palette, self-absorbed in feeling, their surfaces gritty and un-ingratiating, Komarin's paintings can nevertheless become eloquent...the forms resonate when they are at once strange and familiar." In his cake, French wigs, and vessel series, Komarin uses a childlike expressionist style to presents his objects playfully, yet the works are ultimately serious and mysterious, exposing complex hidden emotions. Komarin has received numerous awards



Karyn Olivier, *Double Slide*, 2006



Miriam Cabessa, *Little Black 3*



Karyn Olivier, *Monkey Bars*, 2006



Gary Komarin, *In Parma*

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such as the Joan Mitchell Prize in Painting, the Edward Albee Foundation Fellowship, and Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts grant. He has exhibited extensively throughout the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and Asia. In 2008 Komarin had a solo exhibition at the Musée Kiyoharu Shirakaba in Japan. The exhibition and accompanying catalogue, *Moon Flows Like a Willow*, was orchestrated by the Yoshii Foundation in Tokyo. Throughout his career, Komarin has held teaching positions at the University of Iowa, Iowa City Hobart and William Smith Colleges, New York Southern Methodist University, and the University of Oregon at Eugene, and has lectured at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago, and the University of Iowa.

Karyn Olivier was born in Trinidad and Tobago and received her MFA at Cranbrook Academy of Art and her BA in psychology at Dartmouth College. She has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally. Last year Olivier mounted a city-wide billboard project in Houston, TX and is currently working on a book that chronicles the project. Olivier has also participated in exhibitions at the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Uferhallen (Berlin), the Gwangju Biennial (Korea), The Whitney Museum of Art at Altria, The Yale School of Art Gallery, SculptureCenter and Socrates Sculpture Park, among many others. In 2005 Olivier was included in "Greater New York" at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center. She has been the recipient of many awards and grants including a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award, an Art Matters grant, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award and a project grant from Creative Capital Foundation. Olivier was an artist in residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation Space Program and the Core Program. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Olivier's art practice often uses sculpture to invite dialogue about space and nostalgia; in *Double Slide*, for example, the two conjoined playground slides act as a mnemonic icon, embodying emotive associations such as play, interaction, performance and spectacle. Olivier has said of her work: "Nostalgia functions in my work through cultural references (memory-based and imagined) and through art historical references, notably minimalism. I overlay the two using the simplicity of minimalist language to trigger a recollection of past cultural norms. In employing the directness of minimalist form, the viewer is faced with an often unsettling and uncanny experience in which the fiction created challenges the realness of the original." Olivier is currently an assistant professor of sculpture at Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia.

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For more information on *Balancing Act: Works by Miriam Cabessa, Gary Komarin and Karyn Olivier* or Hendershot Gallery, please contact Jessica Shaefer at 212.239.1210 or jess@hendershotgallery.com.