



sarah bowen gallery
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Phong Bui *Hybrid Carnival for St. Exupéry #2*

July 1, 2005 — August 7, 2005

Reception: Friday, July 1, 2005
7 – 9 P.M.

Sarah Bowen Gallery is honored to present new work by Phong Bui. *Hybrid Carnival for St. Exupéry #2* is a site-specific installation marking the artist's continued interest in reconfiguring space while exploring exuberant fantasies of lightness. Over the past several years, from the lush and elegiac *Homage to Meyer Schapiro* and the elegant *Homage to Tatlin* to the award-winning *Night Flight #1* recently installed at the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Bui's work increasingly transcends two-dimensional representation. The distinction between drawing and sculpture blur as painterly brushstrokes narrow the polarity between the gallery and the work. His installations often evoke the visionary innocence of a child's imagination as the objects drawn into their magnetic field become playful, mysterious, and imbued with allusive potential.

Frequently avoiding any foreknowledge of the given space, Bui proceeds *alla prima*, impulsively responding to the developing work. The soaring dialogue of elements speaks of a thoughtful game of chess in which Bui takes on himself — a parry for every brazen advance. What ensues is a tensile stalemate of taut lines and razor-sharp edges describing a crystalline realm, one in which the enveloped viewer is left to carefully navigate its interstices. Evincing his adaptive methodology, the artist frequently quotes the words of his grandmother, saying "If you live in a long tube, be thin. If you live in a barrel, be round." These words echo in the maze of angular diversions one must take in negotiating his sprawling installations.

Although Bui's installations are informed by his engagement with Cubism and Arshille Gorky's lyrical sense of line, he refuses to be limited by a single idiom or a predictable signature style. The artist's understanding of Cubism derives from his thorough grasp of art history as well as being the product of a committed effort to master its painted language. Having deeply absorbed its tenets both through practice and study, Bui brings into being with extemporaneous freedom the mystifying vision of Modern art's rambunctious youth.

sarah bowen gallery is open Tuesday through Sunday, 12 – 6 pm and by appointment. The gallery is located at 210 North Sixth Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY, 11211. Directions: L Train to Bedford Avenue stop, take Driggs exit, walk one block south to Sixth Street, and then ½ block East. The gallery is located between Driggs and Roebling on the right hand side.