



PRESS RELEASE

## Solo Show Nikolaj Bendix Skyum Larsen

Opening 16 may 2008 18h > 21h  
16.05.08 > 21.06.08

Galerie Vanessa Quang

Galerie Vanessa Quang is pleased to present **Control Wanted**, a solo exhibition by the Danish artist **Nikolaj Bendix Skyum Larsen**.

Based on simple ideas and subtle interventions Larsen's work pursues moments and conditions where our surroundings shift into playful visual poetry. By subtle manipulation or by shifting it's original meaning or function into something aesthetic, Larsen reminds the viewer that what we take for granted and that which at first glance may seem logic is not always so. The exhibition consists of sculpture, video, drawing, neon and a slide projection.



The work lending its title to the exhibition is a neon sign. Its text 'Control Wanted' is taken from a job vacancy note in the window of a minicab office in London where a radio controller was needed. Removed from its context the words open up for different - much more cynical readings such as world dominance or dictatorship. Similarly, the neon piece 'Change', inspired by signage outside a Bureau de Change, takes on meanings beyond that of exchanging money.

Suspended in mid-air of the gallery space hangs 'Cloud', a large sculpture made of barbed wire. 'Cloud' is an appropriation of fragments of the chaotic debris of war and occupation that Larsen encountered during his travels on the West Bank in Palestine in 2006 and 2007. Removed from its context and suspended the sculpture takes

the appearance of a heavy thundercloud. 'Fragile-Reject' is a diptych on large panels. At first glance they appear as decorative minimalist paintings, but at closer inspection the spectator will notice that the rigid pattern is made up from quality assurance tapes used to classify shipping goods. One panel is covered in 'FRAGILE' tape, the other in 'REJECT' tape. 'Fragile-Reject' leads our thoughts towards the increasing problem of human trafficking.

A large volume of line drawings made in the style of 3D effect (blue and red lines) juxtaposes imagery and text from a broad variety of sources; gossip magazines, newspapers and the Internet. The drawings offer a humorous and thought provoking take on current affairs. Also humorous and thought provoking is a video portrait of the American roadside motel owner Bill Balsamico who every week for more than two years has responded to current affairs by writing controversial comments on a large sign outside his motel in Pennsylvania. One week the sign read "Dear Mr. President. Piss on the camel jockeys, bring home all the troops, leave behind plenty of bombs. They will kill themselves. That's their way of life". A slide show projects a large collection of his controversial signs.

The works in **Control Wanted** deal with heavy political issues, but in an open-ended, poignant, poetic and at times humorous fashion.

Nikolaj Bendix Skyum Larsen was born in Denmark, in 1971. He lives and works in London. Larsen graduated with a Masters Degree from The Slade School of Fine Art, London. His work has been exhibited extensively in museums and galleries. Solo exhibitions include: Rising Floating Falling, Nordjyllands Museum of Art (Denmark); NBSL'S NBSL, Transit Gallery (Belgium). Group exhibitions include: Du machinique et du vivant, Galerie Xippas (France); Distant Relations, Museum of Contemporary Art (Denmark); Obliterated Landscape, Matthew Bown Gallery (England); Venice Video Art Fair (Italy); Combine Matter, Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) (USA); Juste un Trait, Galerie Vanessa Quang (France); Une vision du monde, La Maison Rouge (France); SFG, Stephen Friedman Gallery (England); Sharjah Biennial 6 (UAE).

**Control Wanted** is made with support from the Danish Art Council.



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Danish Art Council

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