

New York

Fabienne Lasserre

JEFF BAILEY GALLERY

625 West 27th Street

March 16-April 16

It is strange when female artists practicing a certain type of sculptural biomorphism—the kind that takes its cues from the lumpy, slumping forms of works by Eva Hesse, rather than the platonic curvilinearity of, say those by Barbara Hepworth—are branded with the moniker “feminist”. It’s as if the dichotomous relationship between hard-edged and biomorphic abstraction were still a formal opposition akin to that between baby-boy blue and little-girl pink. Certainly, it would be more interesting to talk about works of this ilk, such as the ones on view in Fabienne Lasserre’s latest solo show, “For the Partner”, in terms of their vulnerability and their humor, their grotesquery and their effulgence, or, in short, their humanity. Conveniently, Lasserre’s sculptures hum with this kind of riotous human complexity, so it’s not difficult to address them in that manner.

Swaddled in handmade colored felt and bandaged with linen strips in an array of vibrant hues, the majority of the works are characterized by spindly armatures, both venous and sticklike, and bulbous protuberances that vacillate between the sexual and the diseased. They are pathetic—a work titled *With a View to Entertainment*, 2011, strives valiantly skyward in an intestinal sheath of felt but seems destined to topple over, while *Wanter*, 2010, resembles a whimsical tube worm, all mouth and asshole, with nothing much of substance in between—and possessed with a precarious vitality, one that is both vibrant and playful, but threatens to collapse in on itself at any moment. The works can be read as a gallery of portraits, sketches of emotional states, or outlines of the vagaries of interpersonal relationships. However, this is not to imply that Lasserre’s sculptures are situated in some numinous transhistorical space. They also function as gathering points for a wide array of possible influences—Ree Morton, Al Taylor, Mary Heilmann, Louise Bourgeois, and others—with whom they enter into thought-provoking dialogues.



Fabienne Lasserre, *With a View to Entertainment*, 2011, felt, linen, acrylic polymer, enamel paint, aluminum, steel, brick, 11' x 1' x 4 ½'

— Chris Wiley