



## KATY SCHIMERT *THE ELYSIAN FIELDS*

OPENING RECEPTION DURING THE  
GALLERY WALK ON SEPTEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>



In Greek mythology, the Elysian Fields in Elysium were the final resting place for the souls of the heroic and the virtuous. In literature, Dante Alighieri based Canto IV of *The Divine Comedy* (The first circle of Hell; the Virtuous Heathen; Limbo) on the mythological Elysian Fields. In Schimert's work, the Elysian Fields become a metaphor for the human condition.

For Dante, Limbo was a place of light enclosed in darkness. The souls of limbo are enlightened by human reason and intellect, but they understand the insufficiency of the human mind to satisfy the needs of the soul. Schimert's work uses this notion, that there is a gap between human want and human need, and in bands of vivid color, and strands of twisted wire, Schimert searches to connect the two.

Barren winter trees, stunning watercolors and a larger than life paper-pulp head make-up Schimert's body of work on view. Each piece is visually haunting, but with her transparent washes interrupted by vivid strings of color, Schimert's work becomes emotionally jarring as well. Faceless bodies, mere shadowy figures and grasping hands, create portraits more psychological than physical. Schimert explores this Limbo, the world of the in between, and her work reflects it; at times it appears to be full of pain, at another glance, full of rapture. Sometimes her landscapes feel barren and hopeless, but then they are also mystical and hopeful. Fluid in form and feel, each piece informs Schimert's interest in myth, magic, and that which is invisible to the eye.

Schimert is represented by David Zwirner in New York, NY. She works in sculpture, drawing, film, and installation. Since 1993, the artist has exhibited widely throughout North America and Europe. Her work was included in the Sao Paulo Bieniel (1996) and she has been the focus of one-person exhibitions at the University of California Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, California (1999) and The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois (1997). She was recently included in the group exhibitions: *...drawling, stretching and fainting in coils...*, Fest-Spiele+ 2007, Pinakothek der Moderne and National theater, Munich, Germany (2007); *Sculptors Drawing*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (2007); and *Space Is the Place*, organized by Independent Curators International and traveling to six venues throughout the United States from 2006 to 2008 and *Landscapes of the Mind* at Williams College and Museum of Art in 2009-10. Currently Schimert's work is on view in the Hammer Museum's show of works from their contemporary collection. This fall, her work will be included in BAM's *New Wave Art Show* curated by Dan Cameron and David Harper.