

"Beverly Semmes At Susan Inglett Gallery," *Musée Magazine*, 24 February 2016.

MUSÉE

## BEVERLY SEMMES AT SUSAN INGLETT GALLERY

Susan Inglett Gallery is pleased to present *Rabbit Hole*, an exhibition of new work by Beverly Semmes, from 4 February to 12 March 2016.



Beverly Semmes's second exhibition with Susan Inglett Gallery probes the powers of a landmark modernist sculpture by an iconic feminist artist: Meret Oppenheim's *Object* (aka the fur lined tea cup) of 1936. As Semmes heads down the rabbit hole of artistic inspiration she takes artist Erle Loran's 1943 book, *Cezanne's Compositions* as her guide: Loran's attempts to diagram and unlock the powers of Cezanne's paintings are a touching artifact of pure formalism and ardor. How to get closer to an object that inspires the art one loves is a profound and perverse question at the heart of this installation.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a ceramic floor sculpture. Through her tactile explorations in ceramics Semmes challenges traditional concerns, subverting the valuation of the analytic in favor of the raw and intuitive. Surrounding the floor sculpture are several

wall pieces made of tulle, felt, fleece and faux fur. These fabric works are abstracted and flattened, by turns weighty and ethereal, carnal and cerebral. The viewer's body becomes implicated in a realm where the comfort of the familiar and allure of the unknown pays homage to Oppenheim's fur teacup. Semmes's rendition of one of Loran's diagrams appears to reorient Cezanne's composition of a tabletop still life to a floating room-scale analysis of the uncanny.

Since the late 1980s when Semmes completed her studies, the artist has devoted her practice to a highly tactile sculpture, working primarily in fabric and clay. She has consistently explored new materials, including glass, video and painting and has frequently mixed diverse techniques and referenced influences seen as contradictory such as expressionism, minimalism, and surrealism, managing to transmit a polysemous discourse at once refined and ludic.

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BEVERLY SEMMES was born in Washington, D.C. and lives and works in New York City. Semmes is currently featured in *No Man's Land: Women Artists* from the Rubell Family Collection in Miami.

Additionally her work is the subject of a traveling exhibition FRP now at the Faulconer Gallery at Grinnell College; appearing earlier at the Frances Young Tang Museum, Saratoga and the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro. A catalogue from this exhibition is now available featuring an interview between the artist and Ian Berry, Dayton Director of The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery and an essay by Ingrid Schaffner, Chief Curator, Carnegie Museum

of Art, Pittsburgh.

Semmes has exhibited her work extensively. Her solo shows include exhibitions with the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH. Her work can be found in the collections of the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C.; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; the Denver Art Museum, Denver; and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, among others.