

REENA SPAULINGS FINE ART
2226 W 7TH ST, 2ND FLOOR
LOS ANGELES, CA 90057

Henrik Olesen

Hey Restless!

Hey Restless! is a Suddenly a painting show by Henrik Olesen. Small scale works on canvas and Masonite panels combine varieties of colorful and dark liquids, milky thickening agents and sticky, translucent varnishes, as well as collage. On some surfaces, the rough marks of an electric sander or grinder are visible. Olesen sands down and overpaints, returning frequently to the same painting to try to make it do or see something else: another painting. A recurring motif of intestines was taken from Jean Fautrier's *L'Homme ouvert*, and the concept of "plasticity" comes from philosopher Catherine Malabou. Brutalism and change, the desire for art at the level of the body, and reclaiming painting as a practice of building and multiplying new bodies. Some works are sleekly edged with glued-on strips of aluminum, others are screwed fast to the wall with metal angle brackets. Paintings are sometimes paired with readymade electrical power strips (= sex, connection, energy). Stomachs, innards, heads, anuses, hands: the art of building a new body, before our eyes, for the first time in Los Angeles. The box sculptures are empty stomachs digesting their two-dimensional contents: images of the tools of their own making (paint brushes, screws, computer keyboards, lists of possible titles for works), a text by Georges Bataille, a scanned (?) box of Persil laundry detergent and Fautrier's intestine again, silk screened in three different sizes. The boxes are all surfaces cobbled together around voids, where the inside becomes the outside of something again and vice versa. Sculpture that comes for your body, belly-height. We say digesting, shitting, thinking, sex: another way of describing how art happens, gets made and remade... Energy comes out of the wall or from the sun, and the sun is another anus. Plugging and unplugging. Concepts and material stuff, material speeds and thicknesses, erogenous zones and texts, tools and affects. Here, square geometries touch and unleash the formless in a dialectic of aggression and submission, bending and resisting, making and unmaking. The humor of putting words and titles directly onto works that have already left language behind. "Hey Restless!" is an utterance, a whisper-shout at the level of the transformation of the body and the work and what's happening in the show.