

MARY MARY

“The Actuality of the Idea”

STUART SHAVE/MODERN ART
23/25 Eastcastle Street
April 18–May 16

A traceable evolution of tempered restraint is apparent in this multigenerational group exhibition: The oldest works are drawings that share a sense of moderation with several recent sculptures, despite the distinct physicality of the latter. The title recalls a quote by Fred Sandback, leaving much room to reflect on these indefinite terms, as well as on the intentions of his work and other artists in the show, such as Carl Andre and Agnes Martin. New works from younger artists also offer a formal elegance and subtlety in their exploration of form, materiality, and the shape of space. Stark graphite drawings from the admired but underexhibited Nasreen Mohamedi feel at home with the equally disciplined marks of Martin and Sandback, while Bojan Sarcevic's delicate brass, wood, thread, and cardboard sculpture is the ideal bridge between the two- and three-dimensional divide. Sculptures by Nina Canell, Sara Barker, and an especially seductive arrangement of tangled rope, brass, and steel from Leonor Antunes stimulate the space with an economy of means, while Gedi Sibony's work, which features a plastic sheet and packing tape tacked on the wall, breaks the silence. Interrupting the understated pieces that surround it, Sibony's sculpture is brash and messy, lacking the self-contained nature of the others on view. Nevertheless, all the works here seem incredibly at ease with one another, although they cause one to long for more aesthetic tension or conflict. Additionally, the focus on the recent past and present proves that these discreet interventions in space and material are consistently relevant; ideas are activated, not just actualized.

— *Lumi Tan*



View of “The Actuality of the Idea,” 2009. Foreground: Leonor Antunes, *MMM*, 2009; Background: Carl Andre, *Graphite Cube Sum of Eight*, 2006.