

SMALL A PROJECTS

261 Broome Street
New York, NY 10002

www.smallaprojects.com
P 212.274.0761
F 212.274.0756

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**JOAN BANACH
CITIZEN**

November 14-December 21, 2008

Opening Reception: Friday, November 14, 6-8 pm

"... it was a huge, dim, glittering thing with a projecting hood that had a remote resemblance to a bowed head, and squatting like some metal Buddha in this weird light that ministered to its needs, it seemed ... in certain moods almost as if this must needs be the obscure idol to which humanity in some strange aberration had offered up his life."¹

Small A Projects is delighted to present **CITIZEN**, an exhibition of new paintings by Joan Banach. In her first solo exhibition at Small A Projects, Banach will exhibit paintings from a body of work she has been engaged with since 2003. These dark abstract images are marked by a disjuncture between medievalism and futurism where peculiar non-colors and ciphers are the fabric of what the artist refers to as "manic blueprints" and "freehand elevations."

Utilizing a technique that draws on the traditions of scenic matte painting for film, the artist refers to her works as renderings of a civilization of uncertain origin, and indeterminate chronology. Perspective and ground are elusive in these half-worlds of portable elsewheres and elsewhere. It is neither day nor night; neither entirely dark nor luminous. We are lost in some sort of freefall, and the agency behind these looming, floating prospects elicits equal parts anxiety and exhilaration.

Joan Banach's work is as timely as it is timeless and the range of terms she uses to describe her position seem eerily apposite to our particular political and economic landscape. Hermetic and estranging effects are the dissonant background of her work - "reversal, displacement, inversion, character distortion, cryptography, multiple perspective, déjà vu" - and cross-cut the demeanor of her predictive images. Constructing distance and empty space, this paradoxical method creates a realism of the fantastic. Where nothing is true except the exaggerations, Banach represents the familiar and the impossible with equal verisimilitude ... an outline of predicaments in an 'imprecise science.'²

Joan Banach has exhibited her work internationally for the better part of a decade. Recently her work has been included in group exhibitions at The Kitchen, LACE and the Stedelijk Museum. This is her first solo exhibition since 1998.

Small A Projects is open Wednesday-Sunday, 11-6. Please contact the gallery for more information or images.

¹ "The Complete Short Stories of H.G. Wells" ed. John Hammond (London:Phoenix Press, 2000), p. 370

² Banach, "Experiments in Cipher Writing," 2008. "imprecise science" is Sergei Eisenstein's description of the occult, magic, chiromancy, graphology, dreams, mysticism and alchemy.