

ARTFORUM

Becky Beasley

OFFICE BAROQUE GALLERY

Lange Kievitstraat 48,

December 14–January 31

"Malamud" is the second solo exhibition by British artist Becky Beasley at this gallery, one of Antwerp's most promising, which opened in 2007. Originally located in an apartment, the gallery moved last fall to a new and much larger space in an area near the city's Central Station. Beasley has thoughtfully made use of this expanded space, utilizing each of its three rooms for a carefully installed series of new photographs, sculptures, and drawings. While the show's title refers to the dry American novelist Bernard Malamud, the recurring element in Beasley's practice is a wooden plank. Acting as an abstract emblem of the everyday, it merges the artist's interest in the literary and philosophical notion of the cadaverous with her formal and conceptual exploration of the potential of sculpture in the wake of Minimalism. In some works the plank acts as a sculptural object, in others as a photographic subject; the former bear the title *Plank* and the latter *Figure*, each followed by a number. Beasley produced a series of four slightly curved planks in American-walnut veneer, which serenely lean against the wall. Large prints, mounted in wooden frames behind either brown or green acrylic glass, depict similar planks resting in a horizontal position on an indistinct floor and divided into several parts. The most striking sculpture is *Figure + Letter (A–E) (series of 6)*, 2008, comprising five identical small planks of American walnut cut into either two or three parts, connected with brass hinges, and mounted on the wall like uneven shelves. With the planks' loosely dangling, limblike pieces, this work playfully subverts the rather tranquil and restrained overall character of the show.

— Wouter Davidts



Becky Beasley, *Figure + Letter (A–E) (series of 6)*, 2008, American walnut and hinges. Installation view.