

# BLUE RIBBON

## VIDEO by KATE GILMORE & PHOTOGRAPHY by DIANA KINGSLEY

The exhibition **BLUE RIBBON** in the lobby of the Office Tower at 55 Fifth Avenue shows the videos and photographs by the internationally renowned artists **KATE GILMORE** and **DIANA KINGSLEY**. It is the first time these two New York based women artists show their work together, who serendipitously each having titled one of their artworks "Blue Ribbon" without prior knowledge of the other's use of the title.

'Blue Ribbon' is a term used to describe something of high quality. The usage came from The Blue Riband, a prize awarded for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by passenger liners. The spelling 'Blue Riband' is still encountered in most English-speaking countries, but in the United States, the term was altered to blue ribbon, and ribbons of this color came to be awarded for first place in certain athletic or other competitive endeavors.

**KATE GILMORE** as well as **DIANA KINGSLEY** use themselves as the main character and various types of individual personalities as inspiration. Both artists address in their work the aspiration of life successfully lived and rewarded, and embrace in divergent ways the struggle that is contained in our day-to-day goals. They create specific narratives that speak to the struggles of everyday life and the different methods we use to make sense of it all.

In her video performances, **KATE GILMORE** creates real predicaments for herself, all of which contain her attempt to reveal the inevitable chaos of life. In each video, she plays a character that is confronted by precariously built environments or chaotic situations that force her into awkward and compromising positions. Determined to make sense of the space despite the endless obstacles, each character repeatedly attempts to control this utterly uncontrollable environment.

**DIANA KINGSLEY** states of her work: In my photographs I'm drawn to situations where control is confounded by dysfunction and formal elegance is poised precariously on the verge of the absurd. Subjects are undone by subtle flaws, minor setbacks, or a sense of impending doom. Although the subject matter varies, a coherent sensibility emerges wherein human frailty and vulnerability are reflected in the most disparate of things. I'm looking for the blunt and unadorned ambience of a one-act comedy, where psychological tension and pratfalls set a mood rather than force any particular narrative.

Art can challenge and change our perception of the world. Free artistic expression gives us other, distinct, uncensored perspectives on the well-oiled machinery of mechanisms governing our daily lives. Art can raise our awareness of critical issues such as social injustice, exploitation and poverty, environmental brinkmanship, corporate and political manipulation, the power of entertainment, and the streamlining and digitalization of human life in general. Forcing us to look differently at others, works of art can become mirrors to ourselves, questioning embedded notions of our personality and our immersion in and exposure to the world. If art can help us get a clearer sense of our potential and responsibilities, it may well inspire us and boost our democratic instincts. Art photography, more so even than video and film has become the tool of choice to capture revealing moments and retain glimpses of truth.

*Blue Ribbon* is curated by Elisabeth Akkerman and is sponsored by the Time Equities Inc. (TEI) Art-in-Buildings Program. TEI is committed to enriching the experience of our properties through the Art-in-Buildings Program, an innovative approach that brings contemporary art by emerging and mid-career artists to non-traditional exhibition spaces in the interest of promoting

artists, expanding the audience for art, and creating a more interesting environment for our building occupants, residents, and their guests.

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Any questions? Please call: 1-212-206.6061

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