

Galerie Donald Browne presents the latest work of Valérie Kolakis, *Lost in the Supermarket*, from April 23rd to June 4th, 2011.

Kolakis' exhibition takes its title from The Clash song, *Lost in the Supermarket* (1979), in which the main character is struggling with identity issues and displacement in an increasingly commercialized world.

The artist's project began with a research into Thomas Edison's concrete house. Originally planned as an alternative housing solution, Edison cast only one concrete house, which was torn down years later to make way for a supermarket and parking lot. The underline themes behind this project are of subtraction, vacancy and false referents in the urban landscape.

Deconstructed architectural drawings, steel reinforcement rods, concrete and the glow of a florescent lamp all hint at an 'unbuilt' house; suggestive of a construction in the making and/or abandonment. Referring to minimalist and constructivist sculpture, Kolakis' work creates an intervention within the space that inserts a kind of non-existent presence. In a sense, this is a rebuilding of an 'object' and contradicting its function. The decontextualization of these materials suggests an emptiness; due to this, an indeterminate quality exists, triggering a sense of displacement and transience.

This project is an exploration of architectonics in relation to issues of migration, displacement and change. Specifically, this is a conceptual investigation of how identity is constructed and subsequently constrained by society and its physical spaces.

Valérie Kolakis' recent exhibitions include *Matters* at EV+A in Limerick, Ireland (2010), *They Go Round and Round*, at 0047 in Oslo, Norway (2010) and *Something is happening that is not happening* in Program :: initiative for art and architectural collaborations, Berlin, Germany (2007). She participated in an artist's residency at The Christoph-Merian Foundation, iaab, Basel, Switzerland (2006) and was the Artist-in-Residence at Program :: initiative for art and architectural collaborations, Berlin, Germany (2007). Her projects in 2011 include an artist residency in Clisson (France), one at L'Oeil de Poisson in Québec City (Québec) and a show at Plein Sud in Longueuil (Québec).

