

Time Out London
 'Claire Barclay'
 2nd – 9th November 2005
 Martin Herbert

Claire Barclay

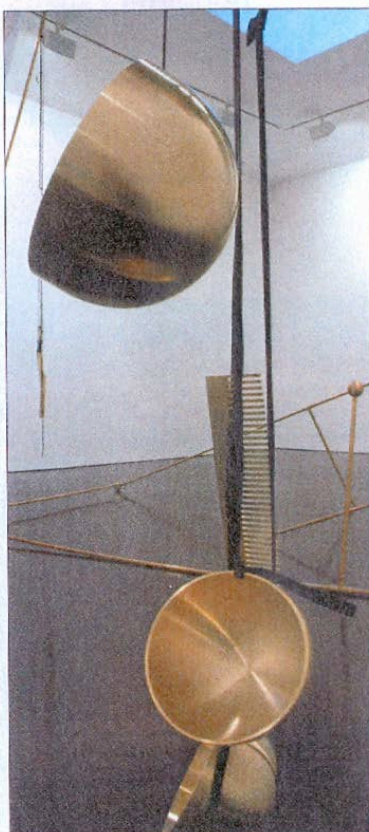
★★★★★

Stephen Friedman West End

It would be churlish to suggest that Claire Barclay switched to a dealer located near Mayfair's glitziest boutiques in order to highlight her art's darkly poetic warping of commodity fetishism. But Stephen Friedman's press release writer is happy to riff on the local context, and there's no doubt that the artist's work looks different at this end of town: more directive, less amorphously creepy. In the main space is a tripartite sculpture: a pair of wooden screens, and a group of planks held away from the window by a cast silver chain, each end of which culminates in a sleek silver suction cup. Similar desirable, functionless trinkets are draped over the work: strips of cream leather, a coil of solid silver. Tall, overlapping sheets of glass lean against the wood, each painted with cloud-like shapes in silver paint, creating a network of bouncing reflections. The wood is carefully grooved and notched: like fashion itself, all this would seem significant if one knew the code. But there isn't one, just an insular cycle of motifs.

Barclay repeats the trick in the back room, with a more spacious work that features a collapsed brass frame from which dangles polished brass bowls, combs and miniature rulers. A frieze hand-painted with flesh-coloured knots swoops down to the floor, sections of the imagery cut out and manoeuvred on the floor just so. A reflexive point regarding modernist aesthetics and fashion seems about to cohere but Barclay keeps every-

thing suspended and subservient to a mood, simultaneously light and sinister, that shadows you into the nearby avenues of commerce. *Martin Herbert*



Detail of untitled installation