

MIRIAM CABESSA***ISOELECTRIC*****Paintings and Drawings****February 23 – March 19, 2007, Opening Reception on Saturday, February 24th, 7 -11:00 PM**

Slate Gallery presents an installation of new paintings and drawings by Miriam Cabessa, who created them especially for the gallery's unique space. Her installation for Slate Gallery includes two main pieces in black and white – a floor-to-ceiling vertical painting consisting of three 52 x 24 inch panels and a horizontal painting of five 52 x 52 inch canvases that wrap one corner of the gallery. Smaller paintings and works on paper will also be shown. Working in black and white, Cabessa momentarily removes our personal associations of color and allows the viewer to glimpse a basic of painting - the play of light and dark. The presence and absence of light makes Cabessa's paintings appear photographic.

Visually Cabessa's work also resembles the isoelectric lines generated by a heart monitor as it records the body's electric pulses, and it is a result of her unusual technique of allowing her body to become a similar recording machine. After preparing the surface of her canvas with wet paint and using only her hands and rags, Cabessa, almost without moving, follows her body's inner rhythms and records their vibrations by dragging the fabric over the wet surface. The painting happens of its own accord, more as a mechanism of the body and less of Cabessa's mind deciding what to do. The graphite drawings are created similarly; Cabessa is exploring this medium motivated by her interest in the intimacy of the process.

Drawing from dual traditions: from Surrealism's automatic writing and psychic automatism and from Action Painting's emphasis on performance and choreography, Cabessa's work is about the ritualistic process of making art. The resulting painting or drawing is a recording of her process, and a self-portrait of that moment. Like Action painters, Jackson Pollock and Gerhard Richter, Cabessa takes painting toward a new direction of naturalism. Cabessa's performance and recording of her body's pulsations is a bio-mechanical dance that already exists in nature. Paradoxically she utilizes low tools to make high art that is simultaneously painterly and photographic, mechanical and natural.

Miriam Cabessa was born in Casablanca, Morocco and moved to Israel with her family when she was three years old. She had a solo show in the Tel Aviv Museum in 1995, represented Israel in the 1997 Venice Biennale, and she will be one of three artists exhibited in 2007 in a show at the American Jewish Museum in Pittsburgh. She moved to New York City to expand her career. Her work is in the collections of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; The Tel Aviv Museum, and the Haifa Museum of Modern Art.