

**PHILLIP LAI**

*open container*

12/13/08 – 01/24/09

opening 12/13/08 6pm

Phillip Lai makes new work for his first show at gallery Giti Nourbakhsch under the title 'open container'. The phrase is drawn from its use within legal jargon to describe the legally and then socially unacceptable act of carrying and consuming alcohol in public. Although overt in nature, this subtly generates a self-awareness in public space and an assimilation of prohibitive code.

Its use here invites a speculation on our contemplative, wilful and desirous existence and projection, within and through these material and immaterial structures. It pulls in these structures as ones that often operate through languages of display, visibility, looking, seeing and being seen – creating often loosely demarcated, deferred or suspended spaces.

The work in the show deals with varying densities, pressures and pluralities of this speculation, working to assemble and fuse different levels and contexts of absorption and inflation, offering mixed motifs of productivity and waste. The work is conceived as inhabiting the gallery space with its own architecture of thought and making, and deliberately works between bold signification and an understanding drawn from its material senses.