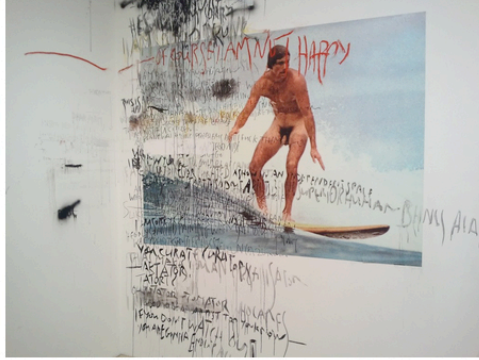
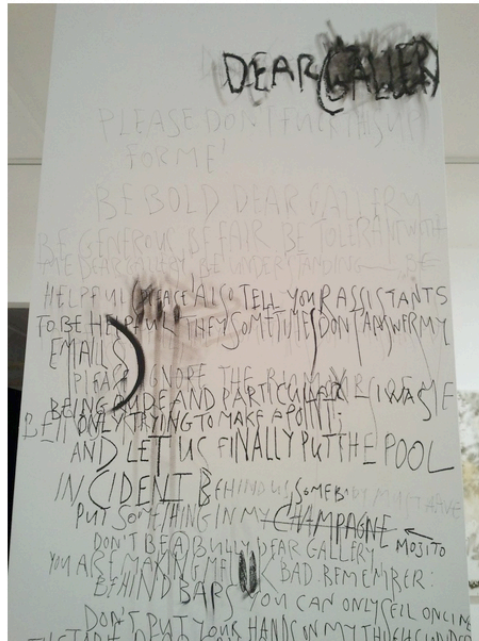


JULY 25, 2012

Sweet Distemper @ Derek Eller



There's a very nice group show up at Derek Eller right now, entitled "Sweet Distemper." It's organized by Isaac Lyle and features work from **Samara Golden, Tamara Gonzales, Davina Semo, Anna Betbeze, and Despina Stokou**, whose site-specific piece, *Conversations on the Dirty Dozen*, is pictured above. All the work is terrific—check the gallery's website for more images and installation shots, or pay a visit through August 16—but Stokou was our personal favorite. The Greek artist, now based in Berlin, had two text-heavy wall works. In *Dear Artist*, below, occasionally enigmatic lines from an imaginary (?) email—"..and let us finally put the pool incident behind us"—are scrawled on a central column:



Elsewhere, Stokou crafts paintings that are positioned on shelves and leaned against the wall. These take the cramped handwriting of the site-specific pieces and condense it into colorful, impossibly dense accumulations of fucked language. *Interview for Poche Magazine, 2012* (below on the left) takes fragments of French and adds a few bricks of color and collage elements. In the case of this work your monolingual correspondent *literally* doesn't know what it means—but Stokou's raw energy transcends the actual sense of the text. This is funny, angry stuff—as in *Conversations on the Dirty Dozen*, which mocks "the Berlin Way," i.e. a gallery submitting a "semi-open call" for artists and their friends to send in any and all work for a "1 week exhibition." ("We want to see what we get.") This is the artist's first New York outing; we don't imagine it will be the last.

