

Beth Campbell

BETHLEHEM

by Charlie Finch



Beth Campbell, *Elsewhere*, 2010

The New York City artist **Beth Campbell** (b. 1971) has a [new website](#). That news would be a yawn from any other artist, but when I look at the stars through my binoculars as the owls hoot in the Westchester woods, I imagine that the Andromeda galaxy and all the galaxies beaming at me from 250 million light-years away have collapsed into us. In other words, there is nothing up there now, in the simultaneous present, and the stars are within us, really.

Only Beth Campbell seems to have processed this essential fact, hence she does mirrors that suck your face in (*Elsewhere*, 2010), lamps that roll like ocean waves (*Blue Lamps*, 2010), tables which warble, sort of (*Stereo Table*, 2010) and neon lights to nowhere, right out of the set of Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut*.

For Beth Campbell does not, like so many conceptualists these days, just appropriate a news story or historical oddity to reinterpret it for us "ignoramuses." She projects the new reality from her bones and synapses and leaves it on the floor, better than **Gabriel Orozco** and sometimes even better than **Marcel Duchamp**. Now what exactly happened to those presently collapsed stars and energized our molecules in this only, lonely place called Earth? I think they transformed into social media, the objectification of human life and relationships: breathing becomes Twitter, sex becomes Facebook, art becomes Artnet. And Beth Campbell would postulate that the inert objects around us bend in an imitation of the life which we are in the process of abandoning and soon may talk, procreate and (gasp!) even die. The candlestick becomes the candle and the candle turns to breath and the breath answers only to Beth. In my view, a perfect world.

CHARLIE FINCH is co-author of *Most Art Sucks: Five Years of Coagula* (Smart Art Press).



Beth Campbell, *Blue Lamps*, 2010



Beth Campbell, *Stereo Table*, 2010, image courtesy the Sculpture Center, Cleveland



Beth Campbell, *sinks*, 2010



Beth Campbell, *Mobiles*, 2008, Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York