

ARTFORUM



Elizabeth Orr, In and Of, 2021, aluminum, wood, plexiglass, 24 x 15 x 1 1/2”.

VIENNA

Elizabeth Orr

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Hintzerstrasse 4

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Elizabeth Orr’s exhibition “The Over There” is about perception: The artist wants to separate architectural elements from their ordinary context, thereby relieving them of their typical function and transforming the viewer’s impression of them. In the show, this strategy of defamiliarization is realized quite effectively. Individual pieces appear lost and lonely, isolated on one wall each. However, if this curatorial decision highlights the spatial effects of decontextualization, it also serves to bring each individual work into focus.

The objects on display can be divided into two categories. On the one hand, there are vertical rectangular structures, such as *In and Of* and *Blue Screen* (all works cited, 2021). These are composed of an aluminum frame, Plexiglas slats, and wooden fixtures, one in green and the other in blue. Their appearance derives from louvered blinds, their

Plexiglas slats angled as if to modulate the amount of light allowed into an interior space. On the other hand, the horizontally oriented *Viewfinder* and *Rest (1)*, wherein the artist uses green wooden fixtures to mount sheets of aluminum behind a glass pane, seem to allude to the qualities of reflection and transparency generally associated with windows.

Looking at these works, I’m reminded of Fredric Jameson’s well-known passage identifying the depthlessness of the postmodern world with the seemingly weightless reflective glass surfaces of buildings such as Skidmore, Owings and Merrill’s Wells Fargo Center in Los Angeles. Orr, however, is not prepared to give up on depth. As if in answer to Jameson, her adaptations of windows and blinds break down the totality of architectural surfaces. In doing so, she reinterprets them as subtle phenomenological devices, inviting the spectator to explore the openings, fissures, and planes that mediate between their viewing position and the imaginative space contained “Over There.”

— *David Misteli*