

Galerie Francesca Pia

Virginia Overton

Fresh Hot Pizza

December 14, 2019 – February 14, 2020

Opening Friday December 13, 6–8pm

In her first solo exhibition at Galerie Francesca Pia, Virginia Overton presents new wall objects and free-standing aluminum sculptures. On view will also be a sculpture composed of wooden floorboards, which recalls her exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern (2013).

Overton's artistic practice is characterized by the artist's intuitive access to specific places and materials. Her installations, sculptures and works on paper largely consist of simple, elementary and often non-artistic materials, which have practical value and use. Based on these specific properties, Overton develops the carefully balanced and minimalist drama of her objects and installations.

The red and black lacquered aluminum elements she employs in the works on view were manufactured by a US advertising company that designs logos and signs for large corporate buildings and banks. The elements were roughly cut when they were removed from shopfronts or high-rise roofs; Overton later reassembled these elements into new sculptural constellations in her studio. Although the original context of these 'cut-ups' is no longer apparent, they remain tied to specific iconography of branding and corporate identities, which is manifested in the colors and forms of the specific typographies.

In the free-standing sculptures, Overton expresses this formal vocabulary as a gestural drawing that focuses on the physical balance of its parts. Her wall objects are typified by the striking physical quality of their volumes and surfaces. By presenting the works at eye level, Overton reveals the peeling paint, holes and bends, cuts and welds and signs of the weather. The visual value of these complex surfaces transcends the symbolism of the objects into the realm of pictorial aesthetics.

Overton neither critically comments on nor sentimentally transfigures the reverberation of the ordinary American aesthetic embodied in these found abstractions. Rather, the arbitrariness of the characters establishes an ambiguous potentiality in which the tenacity of the material and its motivic weight retain a playful interchange.

Virginia Overton, born in 1971 in Nashville, Tennessee, lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. In 2020 her work will be on view at the Hayward Gallery and Goldsmiths, London. Most recently, Overton has had solo exhibitions at the Socrates Sculpture Park, New York (2018); the Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson, Arizona (2017); the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016); The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut (2016); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami (2014); the Westphalian Art Association, Münster (2013) and the Kunsthalle Bern (2013). Group exhibitions include the Front Triennial, Cleveland (2018); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit (2017); and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (2016).

Her works are part of institutional collections such as those of the Kunstmuseum Bern; Kunsthau, Zurich; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson; The San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio and University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, Cleveland.