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Mika Tajima

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545 West 20th Street, New York

Opening Reception: Saturday, January 8 from 6:00pm-8:00pm

Elizabeth Dee is pleased to present an exhibition by Mika Tajima featuring a series of sculptures and painted wall panel forms. This new body of work continues Tajima's interrogation of the performer and the built environment, of how space and objects shape human activities, drawing on the analogies of the music recording studio, film production set, and office work environment - places where types of performances occur. In this exhibition, the figure of the performer is undetermined; instead, an inventory of improbable spaces and abstract representations proposes a variety of new zones, surfaces, containers, and potentials. The multitudinous display acknowledges their diverse modes of circulation as visual representations, creative production, and backdrop settings for activity.

The gallery floor is occupied by several sculptures repurposing an original 1970s Herman Miller Action Office system, the pre-fabricated modular wall panels of the first office "cubicle", which Tajima sourced from a recently liquidated telemarketing center. At the time of its first use, Action Office was considered to be the optimal spatial configuration to foster productivity and shape social interaction. The designer described the structure as "a place for transacting abstractions" for the performing worker. Its wayward legacy as the progenitor of hyper-industrialized work spaces is rendered here as a system closed on itself in functionally absurd, and conceptually provocative configurations: sealed cubes and an open-faced wall mural. The areas they define are inaccessible or irrational, and as a result, the sculpture's spatial presence pushes outward to its surfaces. On some panels, Tajima has re-stretched and re-painted the original blue-grey canvas panels as vibrant monochromes; on others she has attached silkscreen prints utilizing the painting surface as a bulletin board. The networked panels extend into the surrounding room as a sculptural form creating a topology that redirects the form's continuing closure.

The gallery walls are lined with a new iterative series of works titled *Furniture Art*, which are reverse spray painted acrylic frames arranged in gridded formations. These transparent frames contain abstract blooming paint mists and candy monochromes-sometimes delineated by hard-edged architectural patterns that reveal their multiple surfaces. *Furniture Art* refers to Erik Satie's *Furniture Music (Musique d'ameublement)*, a series of infinitely repetitive compositions meant to be background music for different occasions (aural decor). Each *Furniture Art* piece is subtitled by a geographic location-*Santa Fe, Tokyo, St. Croix, Moscow*, etc.-drawing on the specific psychogeographic associations that are produced by affective naming of colors and paints. Two large scale acrylic pieces sized akin to the cubicle panels bring the associations full circle-an amalgam of the Action Office wall panel and spray painted shell forms.

Placed within the installation and in front of *Furniture Art* configurations are vintage ergonomic kneeling chairs designed to shape the body to perform desk work. In the exhibition, the chairs create new positions for viewing the works, transforming the viewer into a different kind of performer.

If the decor must be changed, these objects are not exempt.