

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

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Richard Deacon

By Peter Schjeldahl (January 2019)

The British sculptor, who won the Turner Prize in 1987, fabricates disconcerting objects of variable size (from small to monumental) and unpredictable design (airily looping, glumly massy) from materials that have included wood, steel, iron, ceramic, plastic, linoleum, and leather. Now he adds digital photographs to the list. Each image is mounted and framed on a panel that leans back against another, forming what looks like a peaked roof, atop a finely carpentered wooden table. The paired pictures differ sharply in subject but share subtleties of form: homologies. Fish eyes are mated with a closeup of gleaming chain-link fence. A cactus flower rhymes with a moth. Interspersed with those works are small, black-topped tables that bear flat, freehand-glazed, multicolored ceramic slabs, cut in sinuously contoured shapes and often inset with irregular polygons of similar or contrasting patterns. Though reliably handsome and spectacularly well crafted, Deacon's works aren't especially expressive or conceivably functional. But each seems possessed of a mind of its own, and doggedly intent on solving some problem that it has posed to itself.

Through Feb. 16.
Marian Goodman
24 W. 57th St.
Midtown
212-977-7160

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