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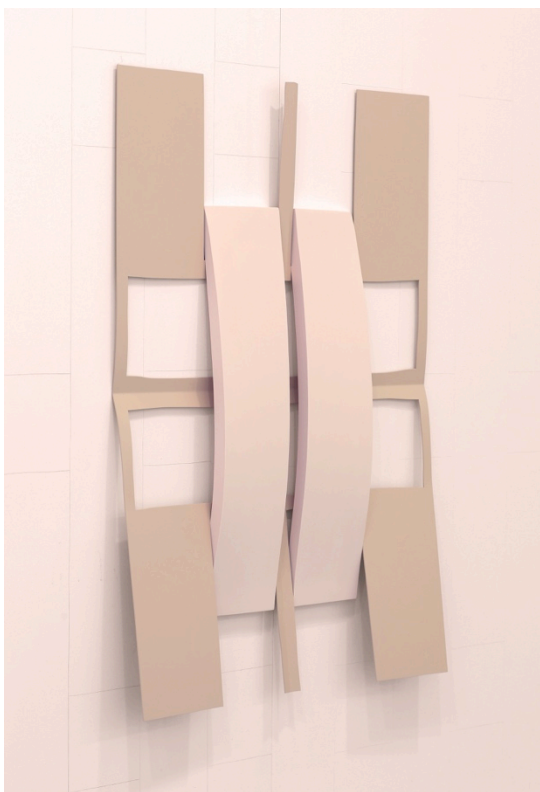
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ARTFORUM

Critics' Picks

Matt Keegan - Altman Siegel

By Monica Westin



Matt Keegan, *Crossed w/ Strips (Soft Pink)*, 2014, spray-finished laser-cut steel, pigmented silicon, 32 1/2 x 23".

The wall sculptures and photographs that comprise Matt Keegan's "And" seem deceptively soft and disarmingly modest. Large C-prints of found machine-made shapes, such as a scrap of rusted and twisted industrial metal in *Was* (all works 2014) or the repeated squares of a car speaker in *Speaker*, are lit gently, creating velvety layers of shadows. The predominant steel wall sculptures, laser cut and modeled after paper cutouts, are painted in improbable pastels, sometimes powder-coated hues of blush and muted mauves and oranges. Several utilize the same shape repeated in different colors (as in the "Crossed w/ Strips" series). Against a built-in panel of pale-salmon sheetrock that extends across the gallery walls, Keegan's work at first reads as serene and

surprisingly mild given the formal, sharp geometry of its objects.

But upon closer inspection, a subtle but carefully hatched grid is carved into this pink layer of drywall, which loosens the effect of each individual wall piece as a stable body in space. Against this lattice, the sculptures create the impression that they are models for nonexistent objects, or hypermagnified fragments of manufactured materials, and photographs of grates and other found grids lose their sense of proportion. The driving concern of "And" is that of scale and how it affects what we perceive as pattern, texture, and shape. At what point do we interpret a figure as being part of a larger pattern or as its own autonomous presence? Ultimately, Keegan disturbs the ways that we interpret the warp and weft of the things that hold our manufactured world together.

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