

FURNACE

ART ON PAPER ARCHIVE

Sharon Butler: Buildingdrawing

June 1 - July 6, 2024



Furnace – Art on Paper
107 Main Street, Falls Village, CT

In the spirited and mischievous *Buildingdrawing*, Sharon Butler has merged the languages of drawing and sculpture by hanging drawings, interspersed with elements of collage and installation, with curtain clips on a rolling grid of metal shelves.

Inspired by peddlers' carts, the shelves are replete with motley objects and function as portable mini-galleries or project spaces. They can be maneuvered around the gallery, so that the drawings and other items sway, jingle, and jostle, like housewares sold itinerantly in a different era.

Nearby, double-sided drawings, installed in transparent holders, emerge from the wall at a 90-degree angle, rendering both sides visible.

Critic Thomas Micchelli has observed that Butler's work shares "Rauschenberg's dissolution of the barriers between painting and

sculpture." As the freewheeling (so to speak) and improvisational nature of the exhibition suggests, Butler sees process as metaphor and makes paintings and drawings in part to document her life and experiences.

Butler is an American artist and arts writer. She is known for teasing out ideas about contemporary abstraction in her paintings, drawings, and written work, and particularly for a style she called "[new casualism](#)" in an influential 2011 essay published in *The Brooklyn Rail*. She coined the term to identify a distinctive incarnation of abstraction that featured a self-amused, anti-heroic style notable for off-kilter composition and a sense of impermanence. Artists' apparent interest in irresolution, she suggested, reflected the percolating uncertainty and instability of culture and society. Like casualism itself, *Buildingdrawing* is playful – even whimsical – in the moment but grounded in serious considerations about life, art, and the future.

Butler has been awarded the Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant and the Creative Capital/ Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writing Program Grant. She has also received residencies from Counterproof Press, Yaddo, and the Two Trees Cultural Space Subsidy Program.

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