

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Fine Art: Playing With Senses and Memory

A Listing of Fine Art Exhibitions in the Greater New York Area

By PETER PLAGENS

July 4, 2014 8:41 p.m. ET

Susanne Hofer: Light Bulb Magic

Fresh Window, 56 Bogart St., Brooklyn. Through July 27

While "Light Bulb Magic" may contend for the worst exhibition title of the year (it sounds like one of those trucked-in pedagogical treats at an elementary-school science fair), it's a well-crafted and—relative to so much electronic acrobatics in the galleries these days—rigorous exhibition. It's also the first U.S. solo outing for Swiss artist Susanne Hofer (b. 1970).

"Vorstadt" (2010)—which in New York terms means "outer borough"—is a backlit, casually ordered floorful of wrapping material, small tools, cleaning fluids, etc., that casts a crisp shadow resembling a city skyline (at sunset, courtesy of another light source) on an opposite wall. Because shadow-generating stuff is becoming quite common in galleries, this piece is not startlingly original. But it is very well done.

The same could be said for "Three Pillars" (undated), a video of a barge in front of the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge, which one views through a peephole, and "Structural Survey" (undated), a stop-action animation of an empty apartment explored by the light of a single bulb. But the two "Corner Pieces" (Nos. 2 and 4, also undated) are incisively novel: illuminated actual-size photographic transparencies set in triangular plastic frames tucked in ceiling and floor corners. The photographs depict what we might see if we had X-ray vision. The pieces work, and so does the show.

—Mr. Plagens is an artist and writer in New York.