

ARTFORUM

Sara Deraedt

ESSEX STREET

114 Eldridge St

October 13–December 18



For her recent exhibition, Sara Deraedt photographed vacuums in store windows in various international locations. These are the sort of window displays in which the device is just placed and lit—with no sales props. Therefore, besides the fact that some of the pieces depict prices in different currencies, we might not consider geography. Deraedt is like an anti-anthropologist, traveling around the world and concluding with “I got nothing.” There is a gentle absurdity and humor to this project. In *dyson animal*, 2013, there is some lint near the nozzle, which suggests either the appliance’s past failures or its future accomplishments.

By using three different kinds of prints and different border sizes to create elegant transitions from piece to piece, Deraedt positions herself closer to formalists such as Joseph Albers and Edward Weston than content-heavy image-makers—think Christopher Williams, Anne Collier. Lynne Cohen’s photographic roamings from neutrality to neutrality also come to mind. The machines themselves, in different colors of plastic, vary as invisibly as the photos. There is a sense of aesthetic choice being automated. To query the physical differences between the photos seems similar to wondering of a vacuum, “Why is that one green?” Because it is—it’s like the sky.

The foregrounded window acts as a lacquer, its specularly impeding clarity and preventing the dust of content. We have become addicted to content. “What is the work about?” This is a question that renders most experience impossible. So it is a great pleasure to look at photos that don’t want to be recognized.

— Matthew Weinstein