

ARTFORUM

Nairy Baghramian

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY | NEW YORK

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Nairy Baghramian's latest show, "Dwindle Down," features, among other works, four jointed glass sculptures that embody the titular verb. Seamed with metal bands and liberal daubs of adhesive, their segments are anchored to the wall by brackets and bolts whose function appears vaguely orthopedic. Thus assembled, Baghramian's "Dwindlers" (all works 2017) outline cylinders that resemble vitreous intestines and soiled ventilation ducts. Stained with successive coats of paint in mineral hues, their surfaces gesture toward a past use as conduits for an unknown silty substance. Indeed, they engage the tradition (advanced by Marcel Duchamp and the Minimalists, for example) of treating industrial artifacts as readymade sculptures. But they position this tradition in a state of dereliction, whereby sculpture emerges as a residual "dwindle," premised on the registration of its own attrition.

By turns prosthetic and infrastructural, the "Dwindlers" court confusion with bodies, buildings, and objects. In so doing, they subtly derange the need that sculpture consider, however obliquely or abstractly, its viewer. Their forms address bodies that are not full but supplemented, synthetic: avatars of a posthuman world whose claim to the organic is hedged by artifice. Each positions itself along the gallery's edges, tracing the rise of a wall, traversing a column, or rimming the turn of a corner. Together, they speak of obstruction and flow. Their installation encodes a certain contingency, in that their parts, though conspicuously mounted, could be reconfigured. Reworked by Baghramian, site specificity comes to mime the essential logic of contemporary capitalism, with its demand for flexible subjects and structures. Eminently adaptable, this exhibition interrupts our expectations of sculpture, offering less a critique than a symptomatology of its present-day disorders.



Nairy Baghramian, *Dwindler_Updraft*, 2017, paint, glass, zincked metal, colored epoxy resin, dimensions variable. From the series "Dwindlers," 2017.

— Courtney Fiske

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