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Art in Review



DAVID ALLISON/THE KITCHEN

A collection of scavenged pipes arranged by Virginia Overton at the Kitchen.

Virginia Overton

The Kitchen
512 West 19th Street, Chelsea
Through May 6

Virginia Overton's works made from detritus scavenged from the Kitchen's basement generate an air of excruciatingly sophisticated decorum.

Ms. Overton, who was born in 1971 and has been much buzzed about lately, reverently recycles post-Minimalist conventions. On a squarish wall a single, 17-foot-long pipe reaches diagonally from one corner to its opposite. Across the gallery about 100 pieces of pipe leaning against the wall are organized by height, as if in a hardware store display. Suspended from the ceiling by a single cable, a thick board hovering horizontally chest high has a glowing light bulb attached to its underside.

In an alcove a row of eight scuffed white pedestals seems to levitate about two feet off the floor between opposite walls. The trick is that wooden wedges are

jammed between the individual pieces so that friction between the end ones and the walls keep the set aloft. The gallery's last room has its floor neatly and entirely covered with two-by-four scraps.

Ms. Overton also designed a low-tech light-box sign for the main gallery that underscores the site-specific, self-referential nature of the exhibition. With black letters spelling "The Kitchen," it replicates one that the gallery had in an earlier incarnation. Finally a flat screen in the elevator runs a one-minute video: an anti-littering television commercial from the 1970s in which an unkempt man in a beat-up Corvair convertible throws trash out onto the highway with gleeful abandon to a country-western jingle about "Tennessee Trash." Ms. Overton has it running backward, but either way it is delightful. She could use some of Mr. Trash's outrageous exuberance.

KEN JOHNSON