

ARTnews

REVIEWS: NEW YORK: JOHN F. SIMON, JR.

The exhibition "Moment of Escape" by John F. Simon Jr. presents a group of mixed-media works (all 2013) that offer precisely what the title implies: every one of these sculptural renderings of paintings is quite literally escaping out the right side of an established boundary of frame and canvas. Some pieces, such as *Third Moment (Little White)*, accomplish this by layering multicolored fragments of plastic laminate and stretching it far beyond the canvas. However, most striking are Simon's larger constructions incorporating the rigid urethane foam board HDU. In these, three-dimensional masses spill out of wooden frames whose edges bulge and extend to accommodate the wayward parts.

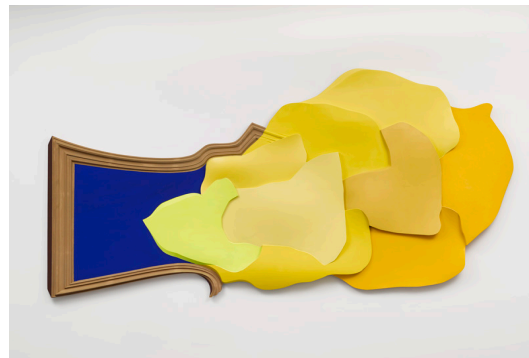
Simon varies the colors and styles in the large works in such a way that each "escapee" can be considered as a different artistic style. *Moment of Escape* features a rich blue background behind the fleeing carved yellows. The white acrylic coating of *Linear Moments* bears pencil doodles and indentations, while a distorted, geometrically lined square protrudes from *Moment of Discovery*.

Simon's experience in new-media art is most apparent in *Every Moment is an Opportunity to Return to the Center*, featuring an LCD screen on which a pixelated coil undulates and turns, a product

of a program designed by the artist himself. The precision of his shapes and their smooth acrylic surfaces have a hyper-vividness usually reserved for images seen on a computer screen.

The implied message in these pieces is simple enough: think outside the box (or frame). But the satisfaction to be derived from the works is in the form more than the conceit—a means of escape. —Kiki Turner

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