

MARTOS GALLERY

Heinrich, Will, "What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week," *The New York Times*, November 14, 2017

The New York Times

Jessica Vaughn

Through Dec. 10. Martos Gallery, 41 Elizabeth Street, Manhattan; 212-560-0670; martosgallery.com.



An installation view of "Receipt of a Form," Jessica Vaughn's New York solo debut at Martos Gallery.

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Jessica Vaughn's [New York solo debut](#) slices through Martos Gallery like a razor. A recent iteration of "After Willis," her wall-mounted reclaiming of de-accessioned seats from the Chicago Transit Authority, which also appeared in [a gallery group show earlier this year](#), serves as a kind of gentle introduction: Mass produced but individually worn, locked together by circumstance, with subtle but unmistakable civil rights resonance, they're a social metaphor as well as a handsome variation on the ready-made.

But her six new pieces up this ante spectacularly. Rectangularly framed upholstery remnants, mounted on plexiglass, with irregular seat-shaped cutouts, they lie in a neat row dominating the room from the floor. "Untitled (Dark Blue), #2" is the fullest box and the most neatly cut out; "Boomer Blue No. 340 #2," a lighter shade with a hideous pattern of orange swooshes, is frayed and full of gaps, like broken teeth; and "Pacific Grey No. 48306" is barely there.

The social metaphor still operates, along with as cynical — and as accurate — a take on the art market as anyone could want. But it's the way the work's formal properties interact with its high-concept content that makes it really mind-bending. Ms. Vaughn is investing value not only in a series of discarded objects, but also in negative space itself. And that's not all — she's discovered that it's much more interesting than the positive.

WILL HEINRICH