

DATEBOOK

"Catherine Wagner bends reality in 'Reel to Real'"

By Tony Bravo

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Catherine Wagner, "Nosferatu and Dr. Caligari," 2024. Photo: Catherine Wagner

San Francisco artist Catherine Wagner's "Reel to Real," takes us through a looking glass with two bodies of work that play with our sense of reality.

Her new series "Moving Pictures," explores the stacks of cans holding celluloid film in the archive at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. In keeping with her conceptual practice and exploration of archival spaces, Wagner rearranged cannisters by color and plays with the titles through theme and word association.

Cinema and a behind the scenes ethos is a through line to Wagner's never-before-seen photographs from her 1995 series "Architecture of Reassurance," which captured Disney theme parks in Anaheim, Orlando, Paris and Tokyo. The gloriously fake, cartoonishly portioned world of Disney often make the viewer do a double take because of how Wagner's images seem to highlight the theme park's illusions. The series remains one of Wagner's more enticingly disorienting bodies of work.

Catherine Wagner: "Reel to Real": 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Through April 5. Free. Jessica Silverman, 621 Grant Ave. 415-255-9508.

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