

AQUARIUM GALLERY

ARTIST: Moritz Lehner

(Ann Arbor, MI)

A Room in a Window

(mixed media)

July 8 – August 4, 2018

ARTIST STATEMENT:

I see architecture as a stage on which to amplify the potential beauty of everyday life; by this I mean, for example, the rush of cool air when one steps into a building on a hot summer day. This can be designed. Or the warm evening glow that fills an office in the last evening hours, a sunset reflected by the old brick building across the street. The old building can be preserved. The new office building can accept its warm glow with well-placed windows. The beautiful wooden handrail that few need but everybody wants to touch. People may marvel and appreciate its maker, or the tree still inside it.

I think that the conception and construction of a building should aspire to the same humble beauty as these scenes. What can a carpenter point proudly to if everything is clad in drywall or vinyl brick wallpaper? To which foreign or domestic landfill does the vinyl siding go when it has turned yellow? To me these questions are symptoms also of a building culture caught up in the haste of our fast paced lifestyles and economies, another recipient of our rapid consumption and disposal of goods and services. Still, I use installation as a neutral ground to test even the “worst,” or uninspired habits of building for their intrinsic aesthetic and structural value as well as for their reception by the others; does the brick veneer seem fake, and thus bad? Can it be beautiful, if done with skill and intent? I see an opportunity as a designer and architect to step back and watch what can be built with today’s materials and crafts, and use this foundation to search for a more relevant contemporary American architecture.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Moritz Lehner split time growing up in Michigan, Austria, and Japan, and recently graduated in Architecture from Washington University in St. Louis’ School of Design and Visual Arts (2017). Upon graduating Lehner sought out a yearlong apprenticeship with a Detroit-based homebuilder in an effort to better understand the culture, methods, and politics of our American building industry, a professional culture vastly different from that of the architectural design studio. He has spent



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time at architecture firms in the US, Europe and Japan, and reaches to photography, writing and large scale installation to observe and process the built environments around us.

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