

Survivalist Shelter, 2011
Acrylic on polypropylene
20 x 26 inches



ELIZABETH BLAU

By Regina Lynch

Since the birth of non-realistic painting, artists have cleverly engaged in a battle between crafting visions into new, realistic worlds and creating works that boldly declare their undeniable identity as art objects. In her most recent work, Elizabeth Blau has found a fascinating intersection between the two. In works like *Interior Landscape*, she presents a series of images meant to suggest the view outside a wooden interior. By framing the central image with panels painted to look like wood, she gives the viewer an entrance into a world beyond the faux wooden walls. This world, however, falls somewhere in between the crispness of a glance out a window and the dreamy haziness of Whistler, Helen Frankenthaler and the more recent Katharina Grosse. Objects, horizon lines and shore lines vaguely present themselves, as if having been recalled from dream, only to be contained and, in a sense, optically legitimized by the realistically rendered side paneling.

In her most recent works, Blau maintains this intricate play between recognizable forms and watery abstractions. Working from various types of alternative structures, both natural and man-made, as well as architectural plans, Blau creates electrified visions, containing unclear references to architectural skeletons. Her *Makeshift*, (*Lavender Haze*) literally blurs the definitions of perspective, mirrored reflections and three-dimensionality, presenting her own version of an alternative space, which can only exist in the painted realm. This work embodies a trend away from the warm, earth toned works like *Interior Landscape*, and, instead, embrace a wonderfully disorienting combination of natural and nearly industrial colors. The unique color choice in this and other works falls perfectly in line with Blau's fascinating play between an actual and a painted reality.

elizabethblaustudio.com / esblau@aol.com