

THE NEW YORKER

ART

"FINESSE"

January 18 – March 11, 2017

The curator Leah Pires organized a group of cagey conceptual works around a thought from Louise Lawler about institutional critique. Referring to its goals to “subvert or intrude,” the artist noted, in 1994, “Those strategies are now recognized and invited. Now it is a matter of finessing, which is certainly not enough.” While it’s the fatalism in her last clause that speaks most clearly to our present political despair, art marches on, and Pires’s exploration of the artist as influencing infiltrator is timely in this era of *kompromat* and “alternative facts.” Masterful trompe-l’oeil pin boards by Lucy McKenzie display manufactured evidence, framing her dealer for a petty crime; Jill Magid’s blown-up passages from a spy novel relate to a project she undertook with the Dutch secret service, which the agency subsequently censored. Don’t worry if the lights in the gallery go dark while you’re viewing the show—it’s just setting the stage for “Blackout,” Karin Schneider’s fifteen-minute-long cameraless film projection.

Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University

Schermerhorn Hall, Broadway at 116th St.

Uptown