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**ARTFORUM**  
M. Archer, 'Angela Bulloch: Simon Lee Gallery'  
January 2011, pp. 231-232

# ARTFORUM

JANUARY 2011

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

**WINTER PREVIEW:  
45 SHOWS WORLDWIDE**  
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\$10.00





## LONDON

## Angela Bulloch

SIMON LEE GALLERY

Toward the end of the 1990s, Angela Bulloch began working with pixel boxes. Each is a wooden cube with one translucent face, behind which are lighting tubes that glow any desired color, controlled by the input signal from the artist's proprietary DMX module. These objects quickly became her signature, employed in diverse ways over the next few years. With "Discrete Manifold Whatsoever," her first solo show in Britain since 2005, Bulloch has again turned to the pixel box, albeit in a new way that emphasizes concerns that have perhaps not always been so overtly apparent. Rather than foregrounding the box as a parcel of digital information operating within a space it helps both to construct and to define, the works in "Discrete Manifold Whatsoever" make more direct allusions to earlier practices with which they share a formal language, above all Minimalism and Op art.

In addition to the birch plywood that Bulloch has largely used hitherto, aluminum, copper, plastic, and Corian are employed in new models, and several of the wooden pieces have hardwood veneers. The wooden boxes have no translucent plastic face, but have instead been pierced with circular holes of varying diameters, the patterning of which is taken directly from Bridget Riley's 1964 painting *White Discs 1*. As a result, it is possible to look inside the boxes and see the lighting tubes and associated wiring, though these reveal nothing of the actual workings of the sculptures. *Euro Nut 1* (all works 2010), so called because it is veneered in European walnut, has red, green, and blue tubes that in combination emit a light that slowly shifts in color across the whole spectrum. *Euro Nut 2* is a relaxed, pulsing blue whose rhythm, while its operation must of course be governed by digital programming, resists any attempts to discover its logic. Both of these, like the other modular works, have an accompanying control box of the same height but half the width and depth. The relation of a set of boxes to the control unit, together with the connecting cables, the connections themselves, and the text panels printed onto each unit, is in each case precise and important.



*Spotlight with Video Games Soundbox* has game sound effects playing through a pixel box-shaped speaker cabinet and paired spotlights, covered with red, green, and blue gels, that are triggered by the viewer's movements. The blurred, overlapping ellipses that are thereby cast onto the wall recall Susan Hiller's *Magic Lantern*, 1987. Such linkages seem to be less about connecting with a legacy of significant female contributions to modernism than about signaling gender as one key dimension of Bulloch's larger interest in ambiguities of all kinds. Another, almost tongue-in-cheek example of this is the two-part *Choice of Evils II*. Two square tables of different heights, one a dull red, the other an uninspiring gray, are alternately illuminated by the weak light from pulsing spotlights suspended above. Bulloch confides that the title refers to that familiar moment on a long flight when we're faced with the choice between the beef and the salmon. On the walls are three colored areas, on each of which fields of vinyl text offer definitions of one of the exhibition title's constituent words. Spatial and relational terms such as TOPOLOGICAL and EUCLIDEAN crop up here and there on the DISCRETE and MANIFOLD panels, and in another intimation of ambiguity and multivalence, the intensifier WHATSOEVER is juxtaposed with POSTPOSITIVE. Above everything hangs *Mondrian Corian (blue)*, a cube of white Corian held in a more or less rectilinear arrangement of black webbing. Inside it is a constant blue light several cables spill out and down one side. They give a sense of anticipation, of being yet to be connected in whatever way may come to seem appropriate.

—Michael Archer