

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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Review: Frank Gehry fishes for the perfect form at Gagosian

By Sharon Mizota



Frank Gehry, "Untitled (Los Angeles II)," 2012-13, metal wire, ColorCore formica and silicone on wooden base, 56 x 46 x 50 inches. (Benjamin Lee Ritchie Handle / From © Frank Gehry and Gagosian Gallery.)

“Fish Lamps,” currently on view at Gagosian, is a return to a familiar form for architect Frank Gehry. He created his first set of glowing, fish-shaped sculptures in 1984 as a commission for the Formica Corp., using their plastic laminate ColorCore.

Created last year, the current iterations consist of jagged “scales” — thin, pale, brittle-looking shards — layered seductively over metal skeletons that emit a golden glow from within. The approach is simple, but the effect is magical.

Arrayed across three darkened rooms, the fish perch on simple pedestals, sit directly on the floor, or hang from the walls and ceiling. Their curving forms seem almost animated by the irregular edges of the scales and the uneven glow of the lamps within.

Particularly wonderful is a quartet of fish hanging from the ceiling. Standing beneath them, one imagines oneself at the bottom of a large, moonlit aquarium, watching the water shimmer as a carp swims up and flicks its tail.

Gehry has declared the fish a “perfect form,” and its sinuous curves have certainly found their way into buildings such as the Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. But such energetic swirls and dips can seem a bit showy in architecture. Scaled down in the

gallery, their organic energy is more convincing and relatable, even intimate, a feat more remarkable for being wrought from broken plastic.

Gagosian Gallery, 456 N. Camden Drive, Beverly Hills, (310) 271-9400, through Feb. 14.
Closed Sundays and Mondays. www.gagosian.com