

Mary Temple
Artist Statement
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Forest for the Sea

Walking through the streets of DUMBO one is acutely aware of being near the water's edge. The looming bridges prompt the association, of course, and the air moves like it's near water...a light breeze stirs it. Even beyond those reminders, one just *senses* the water. It is signified by glittery light in the distance, as one looks out the large picture window of Smack Mellon's front gallery. Inside the exhibition space is a forest of columns that separate ceiling from floor. Standing in this room I wondered if it would be possible to provide the columns with a canopy of leaves and to trade the sense of sparkly blue for shady and cool.

In *Forest for the Sea* I wanted to alter the perception of the gallery environment by engaging the viewer's memory, specifically past experiences of light intersecting space. By utilizing trompe l'oeil painting, I aimed at convincing the viewer that a painted image was in reality light from a northern window and silhouettes from a stand of trees. As viewers began to solve the visual puzzle and understand the reality of the environment, they may have realized they were taken in by a simple illusion—that their senses were surprisingly untrustworthy. By undermining something as basic as perceptual faith, I mean to address the subject of doubt.