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TURIN

Teresita Fernandez at Castello di Rivoli
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In works based on formal garden elements, Teresita Fernandez located seductive powers within the artifice of manufactured landscape and materials. This show featured five large, discrete sculptures made of plastic, vinyl, acrylic and aluminum. While they interacted as a whole, just as carefully planned ponds, waterfalls and arbors are meant to, the glistening, oversized *Waterfall* (2000) stood out at 12 by 12 by 28 feet.

This swooping, slidelike piece consisting of narrow strips of pearly blue and white plastic (reminiscent of retro bathroom decor) suggested the color of water as it tumbles and froths. The sleek, laminated surface presented water only as flat stylization, just as the minimal sculptural form, which started on the wall at head height and then curved out and down to the floor, only suggested a waterfall. Viewers could walk behind the wall of plastic water, but instead of Niagara's mist, they saw the clean lines of an aluminum armature. From the side, one saw the perfect edge of its arcing plane, like an undulating blue line drawing. Despite all the water references, the piece also looked like a roll-out patio awning with one side flopped down on the ground.

Meanwhile, the rainbow often seen in waterfall mist was frozen in place on an adjoining wall. Titled *3:37 p.m.* (2001), this piece was also made of hundreds of small, intricately arranged bits— here, 1-inch cubes of clear acrylic underlain with squares of colored paper, arranged in a horizontal, 23-foot color spectrum of red to violet, with carefully blended areas between each color shift. Despite its geometric incorrectness, the piece was nearly as mesmerizing as the natural phenomenon it represented.

In the next room, *Pond* (2001), a dark, 16-foot-square floor piece, used the same cube arrangements to simulate shimmering green lily pads. Forming a backdrop to *Pond* were two delicate cloudlike wall pieces, *Wisteria (Green)*, 2001, and *Wisteria (Yellow)*, 2000, both made of white plastic panels die-cut into looping computer-designed patterns and backed with colored vinyl that cast a subtle glow on the wall. Similar pieces by Fernandez have been placed in crowded group shows elsewhere with less effect; here they hovered in the background like an afterimage, the visual equivalent of a lingering fragrance.

Even though Fernandez's works are reductive and employ nonorganic materials and forms, they remain both sensual and contemplative. Presented together, they delivered a delightful account of landscape conventions and the primal responses that these conventions evoke.