

SARAH OPPENHEIMER





# All buildings are time-based

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I-131311  
DEC 28 2018—JAN 28 2019  
VON BARTHA S-CHANF

I-131311, 2018 (Detail)  
Aluminium, Stahl, Glas, Architektur /  
Aluminum, steel, glass and architecture  
Größe variabel / Dimensions variable

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The aim is to inscribe the dynamic of a relay, of message received and transmitted, of cause and effect, into the white, seemingly-neutral wall of the gallery. We rotate a panel that turns a helical screw embedded in the wall that in turn opens and closes two planes of a glass window. We activate the wall into something like a switch or a door – open and closed, on and off – though the two halves of the window never quite meet, and the wall is never sealed shut. Emphasis here is on speed, the phasing of movement, and the *delay* in the flow from one movement to another. For as much as the screw acts as a mechanism of relay, it also controls and regulates the pace of our activation into one of slow and steady repetition: as we rotate the panel, we do not so much act upon the mechanism as we are acted upon, our gesture of rotation incorporated as but one crucial operation in a mechanical array of other crucial operations. We become part of wall-as-automaton that not only demarcates space but marks out and measures time, slowly, steadily, deliberately, again and again. We become part-metronome.

If Sarah Oppenheimer's work has consistently put pressure on the ideology of flexibility, fluidity, and transparency as exemplified in the architecture of the open plan, drawing out the internalized divisions, interruptions, and occlusions in such claims to openness and flow, her work also points to the possibility of these divisions of time and space. A door not only bars but also beckons, like the logic of the law itself that both prohibits and sets desire – and language – in motion, with the gesture of a knock, the turning of a handle. And we are reminded that the word metronome derives from the Greek *metro* "to measure" and *neme* "law, custom, composition, melody."

• Soyoung Yoon is Assistant Professor and Program Director of Art History & Visual Studies at The New School in New York City; she is also a visiting faculty at the Whitney Independent Study Program (ISP)

