

# Soft Opening,



Olivia Erlanger

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Fan canister, shower curtain rod, wastepaper bin, kitchen utensil holder, 15 RPM AC synchronous gear motor, lamp cord, plastic, resin, aluminium, paint  
91 × 119 × 116 cm

Olivia Erlanger works across sculpture, film, writing, and performance, exploring themes of the American dream and its delusions. Mining the myth of suburbia affords the artist a focus on the semiotics of the periphery, analysing its architecture, infrastructures and ecosystems. Her practice often addresses the relationships between the human body and technology.

Erlanger's ceiling fan sculptures form part of an ongoing body of work researching domestic appliances as sites of cultural meaning. The blades have been altered to resemble butterfly wings patterned after examples of Batesian mimicry, a phenomenon in which non-poisonous species evolve to imitate the appearance of toxic ones as a means of survival. For Erlanger, this biological strategy maps onto forms of sociopolitical adaptation — the disguising of oneself within familiar, legible forms. The work draws on architecture theorist Lydia Kallipoliti's concept of "closed worlds", describing man-made, climate-controlled environments that exist at the expense of the natural world outside, finding in the household fan a place where nature and domestic artifice quietly collapse into one another.

Erlanger (b. 1990, New York) was awarded the 2024 Fondazione Henraux International Sculpture Prize and was recently nominated a finalist for the CIRCA Prize (2025). Selected recent exhibitions include Amanita, New York (2026); Kunstverein Gartenhaus, Vienna (2025, 2022 - solo); Luhring Augustine, New York (2025 - solo); Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Texas (2024 - solo); ICA London, UK (2024 - performance); Soft Opening, London (2024, 2020 - solo); Hauser & Wirth, Los Angeles (2023), Company Gallery, New York (2023) and at Del Vaz Projects, Los Angeles (2022). Erlanger's work is in the permanent collections of CAPC Musée d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux, Bordeaux; The Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas; KADIST Collection, Paris and X Museum, Shanghai. The artist lives and works in New York.