



The architectural elements of interior spaces – baseboards, wainscoting, banisters, and balusters – are effectively invisible, noticeable only if absent. Sarah Fonzi is attuned to these innocuous elements and creates compositions from their various textures, cast in multiples and reconfigured in new combinations. The individual elements are all subtly iconic and speak to unknown but agreed upon features of domestic experience. Ideas about the spaces that are intended for dwelling and memories of home cannot be completely separated from Fonzi's work. And yet, the decorative elements – like the ornamental plaster foliage of a picture frame, the dappled texture of lace or the fluting of crown molding – do not express anything substantial about the character of those interior spaces or the memories they recall. It is the sheer proliferation of these motifs, seen time and time again, that promises the comfort of familiarity.

Fonzi's installation of layered plaster reliefs in the main gallery space carries some of that comfort at a distance. Whitewashed to match the color of the existing gallery walls, the ebb and flow of architectural and household patterns give her work extension from the real world into an imaginative realm. The wandering lines and imperceptibly twisted geometries within the composition as a whole create an irritable and agitated co-existence between form and structure. At close proximity, the mind yearns to un-warp certain sections so their edges can meet or the single lopsided element in a row of repeated shapes can be realized. Fonzi's nod to symmetry and regularity is a passing acknowledgement of the necessity of infrastructure to provide a solid framework for whatever construction it supports. Here, the gallery's infrastructure supports the composition of textural details, activated by their layering, collision, and convergence across three-dimensional space.

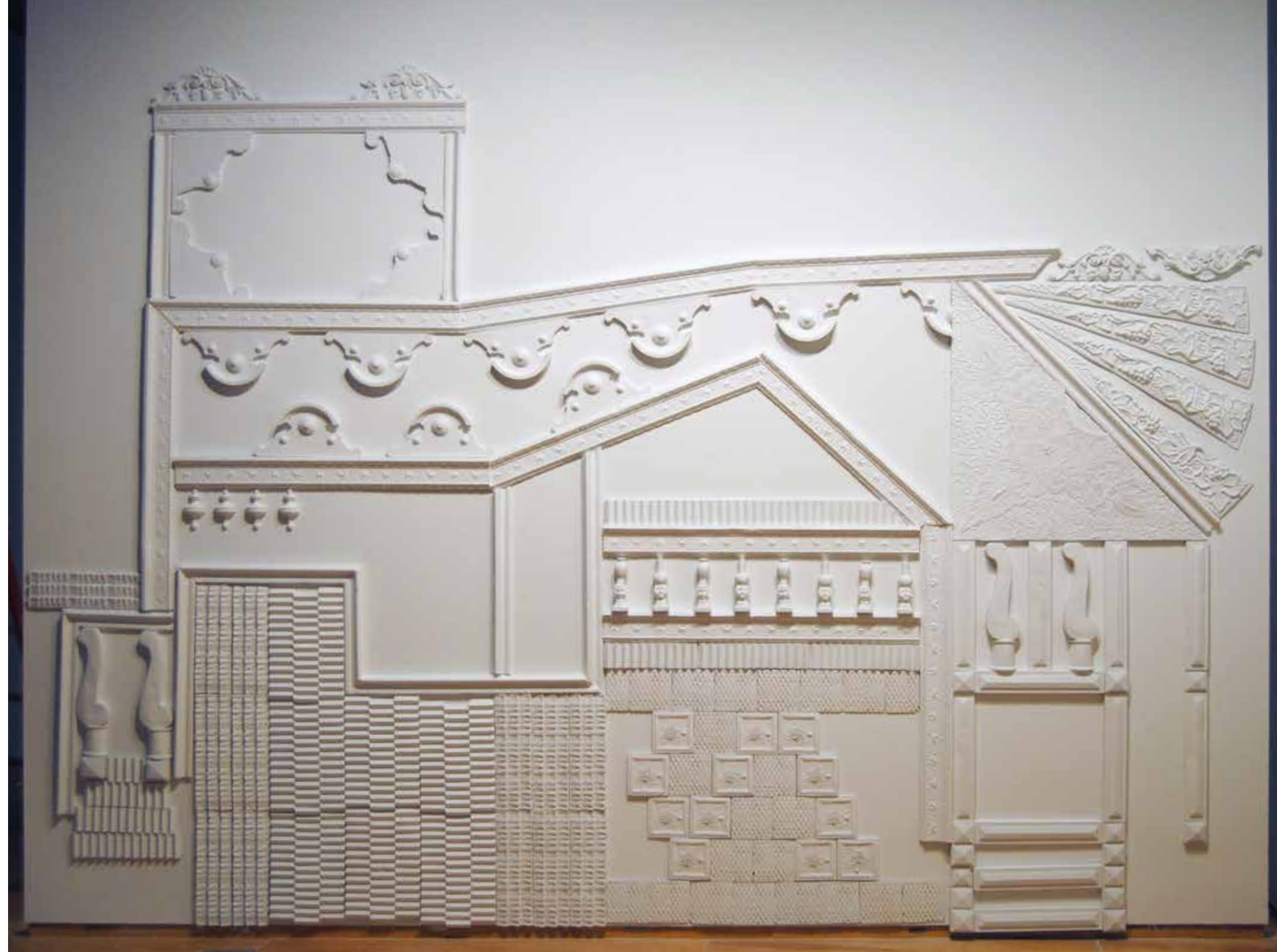
The accretion of Fonzi's individual ornamental elements, in their casting and assembly, asserts itself past the original intent of dressing up the bare bones of an interior space, gaining an authoritative voice that correlates with the scale of the installation and

the quantity of its pieces. Ranging from low relief to free-standing sculptural objects that are pulled back into the expanse of the walls surrounding them, they demand acknowledgement as spatial compositions of texture and balance. The reassembly of these pieces into coherent structures wanders back and forth in between symmetrical repetitions of form and a livelier tendency towards irregular balance.

To the left of the installation is a separate nook of gallery space, whose light gray walls offset the individually hung pieces. These works relate to the various gestures that shape her installation, each piece succinctly exemplifying a specific action within the range of Fonzi's sculptural impulses. The fluidity of crisscrossed baseboards springs from her specific sculptural process. Common practice would suggest bracing a flexible silicon mold with a harder outer casing – a mother mold – to prevent the plaster from warping as it sets up. Fonzi speaks with great enthusiasm about “motherless molds” where the lack of rigidity allows for the bending and twisting of architectural lines. The effect provides the dissonance between groupings of similar, but non-identical multiples.

Fonzi's material distortion mirrors her misappropriation of the ornamental elements that comprise her visual language. Her sculptural process of physical manipulation yields a stockpile of cast pieces that delight in their own deformity and deviation from their original template. These individual aberrations of form, derived the familiar patterns of domestic interiors, further belie expectations when arranged by Fonzi's formal decisions. Separated from their original decorative purposes, her work imagines new structures and expressions of architecture that are thwarted by and benefit from their own improbability.

Rebecca Wing  
Curatorial Assistant





SARAH FONZI  
*Infrastructure Misappropriated*  
March 10 to April 28, 2017

Sarah Fonzi is a Buffalo based sculptor and designer. Frequently drawing upon common building materials such as plaster and metal, Fonzi borrows imagery from diverse sources such as ornament, architectural details, and various everyday objects but tends to skew these sources and their appearance through specific reworkings of material.

Fonzi graduated from the Savannah College of Art and Design with a concentration in Sculpture and a minor in Museum Studies (BFA 2008). Afterwards she worked for many years at the Griffis Sculpture Park and Essex Art Center in WNY.

Fonzi has been sculpting her whole life and continues to experiment with media and process. Since college, Sarah has exhibited in Atlanta, New York City, France, Buenos Aires, and Buffalo. Most recently, she completed a public art commission for the downtown headquarters of Delaware North Corporation, organized by Resource Art, Buffalo.

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