

# ARTFORUM

## Eva Rothschild

**DORIS C. FREEDMAN PLAZA, CENTRAL PARK**

**Sixtieth Street and Fifth Avenue**

**March 1–August 28**

Eva Rothschild's debut US public art commission, *Empire*, 2011, is a twenty-foot-tall multidirectional archway perched at the threshold of bustling Midtown Manhattan and the city's largest green expanse. Until late summer, the structure's ten welded steel tentacles—painted in alternating bands of red, green, and black—will straddle Doris C. Freedman Plaza (named for New York City's first director of cultural affairs, founder of the Public Art Fund) at the southeast entrance to Central Park.

*Empire* provides a graceful physical and psychological gateway between two very different, but equally iconic, New York landscapes. Rothschild's structure highlights the unique energy of its site: a crossroads where taxis, street vendors, and skyscrapers converge with the comparative oasis of shaded benches, winding paths, and open lawns. As passageway to the park, the supple bows and forks of *Empire*'s steel poles evoke tree branches.

Conversely, when seen as an exit onto Fifth Avenue, *Empire*'s industrial material and peppy colors set the tone for the thoroughfare's impressive architecture and lively street life. *Empire* relates aesthetically and conceptually to both its urban and natural surroundings, thus mitigating pedestrians' transition between the two.

Achieving a feat that unfortunately eludes many public artworks, Rothschild's construction is monumental while ultimately remaining permeable and accessible. With its peaked apex and majestic stature, *Empire* is undeniably regal and celebratory, but it is also welcoming, unimposing, and delightful.

— Mara Hoberman



**Eva Rothschild, *Empire*, 2011**, painted steel, 18 3/4 x 32 3/4 x 25 1/4'.

All rights reserved. artforum.com is a registered trademark of Artforum International Magazine, New York, NY