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By DAVID PAGEL

**Space Exploration:** Five years ago, Uta Barth made a breakthrough body of work by photographing the space between things in sparsely furnished interiors. Since then, she has made similar, seemingly out-of-focus color photographs of urban and rural landscapes, giving blurry form to trees, buildings and automobiles, all the better to capture on film what we usually think of as the empty space between them.

At ACME Gallery, a new body of work titled "nowhere near" puts these two sides of Barth's art together. Focusing on the spaces between interiors and exteriors, this meditative series of smartly framed prints depicts the views on both sides of the windows of the artist's Culver City apartment. Shot morning, noon and night during the winter, spring and summer, the nearly 3-by-4-foot photographs invite viewers to look *at* them and *through* them, just as actual windows do.

In one single-panel piece made on an overcast day, the droplets of water that cling to Barth's window seem to have more substance and tangibility than all of the yellowed grass, unidentifiable fruit trees and indistinct hedges in her backyard. In other works, Barth positions the camera so close to the windows that their panes are not visible. When she does this she uses a diptych format, which emphasizes that each view of the outside world is contingent upon her movements

inside her living room.

The only triptych treats the outdoors as an incidental backdrop for a seemingly sustained meditation on the grid formed by windowpanes. The only nighttime diptych allows the windows to function as mirrors, revealing the room and hall behind Barth's camera. In another glare-filled pair of prints, the exterior and interior spaces fuse, as afternoon sunlight pours into her apartment; the windows, their panes and frames appear to dissolve in blinding brightness.

Ultimately, Barth's photographs are less concerned with exploring the literal qualities of her apartment's windows than using them as metaphors for her art's capacity to get inside your head. Extremely successful in eliciting daydreams, her work also demonstrates that the world drifts out of focus whenever we get inside our own heads and really get thinking.

• ACME Gallery, 6150 Wilshire Blvd., (323) 857-5942, through Nov. 13. Closed Sundays and Mondays.