

1,820 lb Gambit

Sam Payne

SPRING/BREAK Art Show, New York, NY
March 3 – 8, 2015

SPRING/BREAK Art Show
Aaron Gemmill and Samuel Payne
Curated by Rachel Valinsky

Room 4021, 4th Floor East Hallway
Skylight at Moynihan Station
307 West 31st Street at 8th Avenue
New York, NY 10001

The exhibition investigates daily spatial exchange as a strategy for marking, mapping, and charting forms of displacement and directional movement. The show presents certain tactics linked to intuitive and adaptive experiences of space that undercut or problematize rational understanding of a landscape's continuous qualities and imbue everyday practices with new critical perspectives. To this effect, it postulates that the affective and spatial labor implicitly performed at the individual level, describes a negotiation of space, a constant exchange which also points to a form of resistance to the rationalization and commodification of memory, images, transportation, and communication.

Samuel Payne's work explores displacement as a function of ludic play, materials, and physical labor. Payne's work takes cues from Archimedes' principle, which indicates that the force of an object moving upwards as it is submerged partially or fully in fluid, is equal to the weight of the fluid that the object displaces. Mapping this displacement, which emerges from the relationship between an object and its fluid, shifting context, Payne tracks the objects' relation to the center and to the periphery. In his most recent work, 1,820 lb Gambit, Payne elaborates on the difference between destruction and storage, disappearance and displacement. Using tiles he was once hired to remove himself from the floor of a gallery, Payne doubles their removal, by installing and extracting them from the exhibition space's floor. In pulling the centerpiece out and placing it in a bin on the periphery of the room, Payne also puts the outside on display and conflates the temporality of the tiles' exhibition. He asks what the residue of memory of labor can be when the work wants to point to an absence.

In Aaron Gemmill's to live where others pass (nest) series, road data from MTA bus maps was processed through nesting software to produce a laser-cut acrylic panels, which were then used as printing plates. The plates were installed as the floor of an art fair booth where the weight of visitors' footsteps created cracks in the surface. Abstracting the transit map onto a floor relief, which in turn took on multiple forms into these unique, idiosyncratic prints, Gemmill repurposes modes of spatial organization into intelligible new propositions for routing movement and tracking the history of the printing plate's activity, use, and packaging. In his photographs, Gemmill has positioned himself at the intersection of a sidewalk at the coordinates 40.701, -73.987 (near the underpass crossing of the Manhattan Bridge and the Brooklyn Queens Expressway). Through a conflation of the angles and the photographic frame's aspect ratio, the photographs collapse two-point perspective of the image into the frontal image object that contains it. Gemmill uses the expansion joints as rules to create folds in the photographs.

Samuel Payne (b. 1982, New York) lives and works in Brooklyn. He earned his MFA in painting at the University of Washington in Seattle, and his BA at Hampshire College in Massachusetts. His work has been exhibited at Torrence Shipman, New York and Peninsula Art Space, New York

Aaron Gemmill (b. Birmingham, AL) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. He holds an MFA from Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College. His work has been exhibited at P!, Cleopatra's Greenpoint, Socrates Sculpture Park, Carriage Trade in New York, among others.



















WHERE DID YOU GO FOR SPRING/BREAK, 2015?

MAR 24, 2015

by KATY DIAMOND HAMER



It may be back to school, but the question is: Where did you go for SPRING/BREAK? Did you go to Cancun or the Skylight at Moynihan Station? In its fourth year the SPRING/BREAK art fair left the school in Nolita where it was located previously in favor of abandoned offices of the US Postal Service parallel to Penn Station. The fair grew exponentially to *97 curator represented spaces and 400 artists. Ranging from small galleries who were not included in other fairs to specifically curated projects by independent curators and artists functioning as curators. The rooms varied and when entering each space it was relatively easy to forget that this was happening in midtown, one of the busiest parts of Manhattan. The most detrimental part of SPRING/BREAK this year, was just that it was, in my opinion, too big. When in a booth or open format visual situation, it is easier for visitors to meander between galleries and choose which artworks to focus on. The closed installation of SPRING/BREAK, doesn't allow for this and one must choose which rooms to enter and which to walk past. It's nearly impossible to go into every room without spending a full day to truly absorb what one is seeing and still being an emergent fair, it isn't necessarily yet worthy of a full day of time. The downtown location was much more size appropriate and spatially manageable. The Skylight at Moynihan Station also has a certain musty scent that was not appealing. All that being said, I spent at least four hours walking the long hallways and chatting with many friends and acquaintances who were taking part. Photographs from these rooms are below. Congrats to all the artists, many of who are not represented by galleries, you got new eyes on your work! That is really most important. Also, big shout out to the founders of SPRING/BREAK [Andrew Gori and Ambre Kelly, The They Co.](#), who have succeeded in growing the fair since 2009 without charging artists for exhibition spaces. It is by far the most democratic fair. Let's just hope that the location next year is either cleaned up or a different venue. I'm all for gritty, unused or underused spaces in New York, although when looking at art, we must remember that every detail becomes relevant in the experience, positive and negatively effecting what is being looked at. All that said SPRING/BREAK, as always had great work and energy. It's where the cool kids not only hang out, but get dirty.

Below are some of the Top Picks from SPRING/BREAK 2015.

At SPRING/BREAK in the Moynihan Station, occasionally the space dictated (or limited) projects and installation possibilities and other times, it led to a site-specific artwork. The latter was the case with curator [Rachel Valinsky](#) and artists Aaron Gemmill and Sam Payne. This particular curatorial project confronted spatial mapping. Dealing directly with the greater New York area, Gemmill made what appear to be drawings, but are actually made using a printing plate and abstracted transit map. In this particular body of work titled, *to live where others pass (nest) series*, the artist had a multi-process way of working, tracing patterns, maps and even human presence, resulting in something that he actually has very little physical interaction with. On the opposite end, Sam Payne was once asked to remove tiles from an exhibition space in New York. He chose to collect the remnants and pieced together what he could find to form *1,820 lb Gambit*, a floor 'extracted and installed'. The piece was one of the strongest in SPRING/BREAK, directly repurposing the materials from another art venue and reinstalling with the same intention they originally had. The piece creates a false memory in the same way that we re-enter or revisit a space that we had never been too. The disorderly organization of the pieced together tiles and the irregularity of the surface of the floor, were a subtle yet effective intervention. Also placed on the tiles were pieces of fruit, recalling the 2011 exhibition by [David Adamo](#) at UNTITLED (ceramic fruit based on actual fruit the artist tossed in the studio) and [Mario Merz, Tavola a spirale](#) (Spiral table), 1982 (fruit and vegetables places on a spiral table allowed to age). There is so much history in death.