

Time and Permanence: Ryan Foerster and Ben Schumacher



ABOVE: INSTALLATION VIEW COURTESY OF MARTOS GALLERY

MARTOS GALLERY

Arranged alongside the walls of Martos Gallery are a dozen plastic drink bottles, filled with mystery liquids—they might be urine, or rainwater. A two-liter Sprite bottle looks like it's filled with motor oil. Artists Ryan Foerster and Ben Schumacher found these half-filled bottles on walk along side railroad track in Brooklyn, which became the crux of the collaboration in their first show together at Martos Gallery in New York [opens tonight]. The work in the exhibit revolves around gestural accidents, work that is constructed but embraces chance.

Foerster and Schumacher grew up two hours apart from each other in southern Ontario, only to meet in Brooklyn years later. The work in the show stems from the similar sensibilities of time, embracing the aging of objects and past work while addressing the instance mistakes that make life interesting.

Foerster's contribution to the two-person exhibit is a number of photographs, which present accidents within the photo-making processes and the various patinas that are formed when a photo or photo plate is left outside. A large, semi-abstract photograph of a girl hangs alone in the back part of the gallery. The photo was damaged in shipping, and instead of scrapping the work, he indulged the mistake by leaving the photo on the roof of his Brighton Beach home. The result is a summer's worth of weathering, stains, mildew, and bird shit that transforms the photo into the star-filled galaxies captured by the Hubble Telescope.

Contrasting with Foerster's work are the clean lines of Schumacher's' fabricated sculptures: a six-foot-high plaster mold, pieces of custom built window frames and mesh. The work addresses a similar engagement with time and permanence. A five-foot-high metal frame encases a gently laid strip of a yoga mat, a loose object in a rigid frame. It looks as though the mat will slip off at any second and the "drawing" will be erased.