

ART IN REVIEW

Ryan Foerster

By Karen Rosenberg

Martos Gallery

540 West 29th Street, Chelsea

Through Wednesday

Ryan Foerster practices a fetching, free-spirited form of photography in which mistakes and accidents are valued and much is left to chance. Entropy reigns supreme at his latest solo, despite the cyan-and-magenta color scheme.



Ryan Foerster's "sudbury, brighton beach etc.," (2012), part of an exhibition of his prints and found objects at Martos Gallery. Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery

MARTOS GALLERY

The installation style owes something to Wolfgang Tillmans, especially in the mesmerizing, free-associative cluster of prints, printing plates and assorted found objects covering one of the gallery walls. Ryan McGinley may be another influence, as seen in portraits of friends en déshabillé. But [Mr. Foerster](#) has his own quirky process, one that takes place both inside the darkroom and out in nature.

Typically he will place photosensitive paper on the ground outdoors and cover it with dirt, leaves or, as in “Giant Compost,” food scraps. These intriguing works (and others made with corroded mirrors) link photography, long associated with preservation, to decay. And they have a lush, painterly messiness that’s difficult to resist, even when they evoke floods and other disasters; in “sudbury, brighton beach etc.,” a print lies on the floor under a scattering of rocks and slag.

Works like these tip over from photography into sculpture, but Mr. Foerster still has some work to do in this second medium; his larger found-object sculptures, like the doubled-over bed frame or the single piece of bent aluminum, are irritatingly coy. They could use a little of the nothing-is-precious attitude of the photographs.