



TIME EQUITIES INC.



Social Structures

Jillian Mayer and Adam Parker Smith

Opening Wednesday, November 16th, 6:00 – 8:00pm

125 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038

Art-in-Buildings is pleased to announce the newest exhibition in the lobby of 125 Maiden Lane: *Social Structures*, featuring works by Jillian Mayer and Adam Parker Smith.

Jillian Mayer and Adam Parker Smith imbue their art practice with a biting sense of humor that is apparent in the materials and processes they deploy. Challenging perceptions of authorship, authenticity, and pop culture, their work approaches these ideas from different directions; the language Mayer developed to surround her *Slumpies* toes the line between artist statement and design marketing, yet the physical works reject the perfection and slickness of design objects. The *Slumpies*' obvious handmade-ness and clumsy shapes insist upon being regarded as sculptures, despite their utility. In contrast, Smith's work presents as overly perfect. From the front, his sculptures appear to be floating, precariously stacked Mylar balloons - the epitome of slick, shiny, ephemeral, and tacky. The artist, however, leaves the backs of each sculpture raw, revealing that they too, are laboriously handmade. The works on view in *Social Structures* develop a powerful tension between the actual and the perceived.

Mayer's work explores technology's role in forming identities, experiences, and the relationship between our physical and digital lives. Her *Slumpies* are functional sculptural structures designed to accommodate the natural, "slumping" position the body takes when interacting with smart phones. Viewers are invited to interact with (slump upon) the works, some of which charge phones and emit Wi-Fi. As Mayer notes, "With new research indicating that smartphone users spend an average of 4.7 hours on their devices daily, one must wonder why there has not been an increase in physical structures that will help support the human body in this journey to connect globally through their phone." *Slumpies* consider a future in which our

bodies have physically deformed to accommodate the hours spent hunched over and focused on a tiny screen. They also serve to further alienate smart phone users in the public sphere. *Slumpies* are, however, handmade and deeply imperfect objects, a response to the overly-designed, filtered, and Photoshopped world of digital marketing found on the screens they accommodate.

Smith's work confounds easy description. The totemic structures resemble an alphabet soup of gold Mylar letter balloons; they beg to be read, but deciphering them is impossible. His sculpture *Mr. Risky* adds a giant Mylar diamond ring and jumping dolphin to the string of letters. Like false hieroglyphics, his sculptures appear to have literal meaning, but Smith employs these created objects like brushstrokes, developing line, color, and movement. His works question the canon of art history; references include Greek and Roman sculptures, and a trompe l'oeil-like emphasis and exaltation around the idea of authenticity. By displaying the deceptive realism of the front of the sculptures, while stripping the balloon of its fragility from the back, Smith exploits the tension between real and fake. The desire to stabilize and reinforce a material as fleeting as a balloon, something that spends a few moments entertaining us before ending up in the trash, is a keen way of addressing an ambivalent audience accustomed to an emphasis on overconsumption and the planned obsolescence of objects.

Jillian Mayer is a Miami-based artist and filmmaker. Her series *Slumpies* will be the subject of a solo presentation at the Perez Art Museum Miami in December. Her video works and performances have been premiered at institutions such as MoMA, MoCA:NoMi, BAM, Bass Museum, the Contemporary Museum of Montreal with the Montreal Biennial (2014), the Guggenheim Museum and film festivals such as Sundance, SXSW, and the New York Film Festival. Mayer is a recipient of the Creative Capital Fellowship for 2015, the South Florida Cultural Consortium's Visual/Media Artists Fellowship 2011 and 2014, Cintas Foundation Fellowship 2012, and was named one of the "25 New Faces of Independent Film" by Filmmaker Magazine. She is also a fellow of the Sundance New Frontiers Lab Program for 2014, a recipient of a Harpo Grant and the Zentrum Paul Klee Fellowship in Bern, Switzerland for 2013.

Adam Parker Smith (b. 1978) lives and works in Brooklyn. Recent solo shows include *Oblivious The Greek* at The Hole, New York ('16) and *The Cut* at Ever Gold [Projects] ('16). Recent group exhibitions include *Default* at Honor Fraser, Los Angeles ('16), *Mirror-Mirror* at Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton ('16), and *A Rare Earth Magnet* at Derek Eller, New York ('15). Reviews of his work have appeared in *Art in America* (March 2013, Brian Boucher) and *The New York Times* (August 2015, Roberta Smith) among other various international publications.

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Image on the left: Jillian Mayer, *Slumpie 10-Lawn Chair*, 2016, courtesy the artist
Image on the right: Adam Parker Smith, *Augustus*, 2015, courtesy the artist

Social Structures is curated by Jennie Lamensdorf and sponsored by the Time Equities Inc. (TEI) Art-in-Buildings. TEI is committed to enriching the experience of our properties through the Art-in-Buildings Program, an innovative approach that brings contemporary art by emerging and mid-career artists to non-traditional exhibition spaces in the interest of promoting artists, expanding the audience for art, and creating a more interesting environment for our building occupants, residents, and their guests.

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