

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: Sam Lewitt  
*DREAMBOAT DIRTBLOCK*

Location: 88 Eldridge Street, New York, NY 10002

Dates: January 16 – February 23, 2019

Reception: Thursday, January 16, 6-8 pm



*Why do [those] in the middle of the boat move the boat the most? Is it because the oar is a lever?*

- Archytas of Tarentum

Cover the champagne glasses. They'll swell to shattering. A toast – to a streamlined luxury liner that will never exist.

Dirt block is your hard cure for lack of supply.

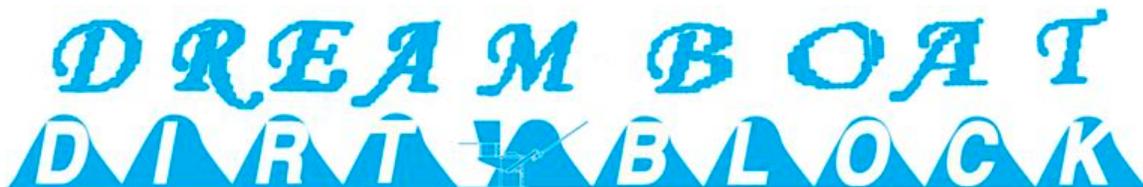
The lever is a stick plus will. No bubbles here. Pressure expels excess air.

Brick fits your hand.

Disappointment follows relief. The portal cracked to soft focus lenses. It's all stagecraft.

You know this.

Pleasure follows disappointment. Unfulfilled projects look better in the pictures. It's never enough.



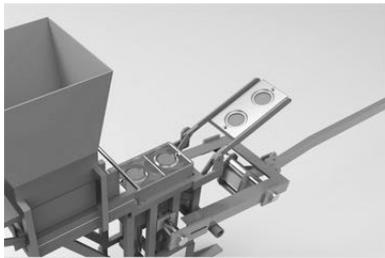
*DREAMBOAT DIRTBLOCK* is made between a lever and lens. Compressed blocks of soil extracted from NYC building foundation pits, curing to maximum hardness throughout the duration of the exhibition sit next to fragmented images of a boat, itself a toppled skyscraper.



This unrealized design for a streamlined cruise ship from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century is the result of an office exercise commissioned by Norman Bel Geddes design associates. The boat was shaped to optimally reduce friction with external environmental conditions. In this exhibition it appears through the effluence of its internal combustion. The drift of multiple fires has been simulated in a digital model of its hull using software designed to test fluid dynamics.

*LENS* crystallizes snapshots of this ‘smoke test’ into light shaping surfaces. Milled shards of a shattered Plexiglas sheet filter the light from a single LED: gathering it into an image through sheer surface variation. These projections are physically identical to rippled patterns refracted onto surfaces adjacent to water on a sunny day. The computational reconstruction and control of this phenomenon is being developed as a method of optical watermarking. While the movement of water and light are technically the guiding principle, in optics this phenomenon is referred to as a “caustic” projection, a word whose original meaning is “to burn.”

*LEVER* produces more terrestrial projectiles: interlocking blocks of compacted subsoil dug up for the project of stabilizing air rights over terra firma. These compressed earth blocks are made with a manual earth-ramming machine, whose mobility within resource scarce contexts enables the direct use of local soil for shelter and road construction.



This press is a descendent of the so-called CINVA-RAM designed in the 1950s by Chilean engineer Paul Ramirez. It is historically associated as much with the ambiguous history of “self-help” housing in the developing world throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century as it is with practitioners of small-scale ecological self-sufficiency. It is portable, yet totally bound to a simple metabolism of production with the ground on which it sits. Dreams of frictionless transport are grounded in relations negotiated on site.

*DREAMBOAT (Model Views)* presents further fragments of the boat model rotating through various perspectives. These views result from the resistance of oil, acid and water to one another. The craft’s shell is etched by these clashing fluids on the surface of copper-clad plastic, a material support that is engineered to control friction and passage in the circulation of information.

*Sam Lewitt was born in Los Angeles in 1981. He completed the Whitney Independent Study Program in 2005 after receiving his BFA from the School of Visual Arts in 2004. In 2017, his work was on view in ARTE VIVA ARTE, the 57th International Art Exhibition, Venice Biennale. Lewitt’s exhibition More Heat Than Light opened in September 2015 at the CCA Wattis Institute in San Francisco, before then traveling in 2016 to the Kunsthalle Basel, and finally, under the title Less Light Warm Words, to the Swiss Institute in New York. Previously, Lewitt co-organized the exhibition Materials and Money and Crisis at the MUMOK (Vienna) with Richard Birkett, a show in which he was also included, and drunken walks/cliché/corrosion fatigue/ebay at Miguel Abreu Gallery. His work “Fluid Employment” was exhibited in the 2012 Whitney Biennial. Solo exhibitions dedicated to Lewitt’s work have been held at Miguel Abreu Gallery (2018, 2014, 2011, 2008, 2006), Galerie Buchholz, Berlin and Cologne (2017, 2013, 2011, 2008), Leopold-Hoesch-Museum, Düren (2014), and Galleria Franco Soffiantino, Turin (2009, 2007). His work has also appeared in exhibitions at the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Museum of Modern Art, Bergen Kunsthall, Secession, La Panacée, The Brno House of Arts, the Pulitzer Foundation, Fridericianum, David Roberts Art Foundation, White Columns, SculptureCenter, MoMA PS1, Artists Space, the Swiss Institute, David Zwirner, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, and Andrew Roth Gallery. His work is held in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, MUMOK, Vienna, the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and the Fondation d’Entreprise Galeries Lafayette, Paris, among others. Lewitt was the recipient of the 2018 BMW Open Work commission at the Frieze Art Fair in London, a 2018 Grants to Artists award from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, and was also the 2018 Teiger Mentor in the Arts at Cornell University.*

*Lewitt will have a solo exhibition at Z33 – House for Contemporary Art in Hasselt, Belgium in June 2020.*