

MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE

Curated by Tess Sol Schwab
@ SPRING/BREAK Art Show | Room 4114

March 3 | VIP Preview
March 4 | noon-8 pm
March 5 | noon-8 pm
March 6 | noon-8 pm
March 7 | noon-8 pm
March 8 | noon-6 pm

Skylight at Moynihan Station
307 West 31st Street (at 8th Avenue)
New York, NY 10001



MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE brings together four artists who question the cultural and symbolic roles of currency and art in society. While most artists generally use inexpensive materials to craft their works of art, **Harriet Bart**, **Margaret Bowland**, **Nancy Lorenz** and **Mark Wagner** have each employed mediums our society considers highly valuable – gold and United States currency – and destroyed these materials in pursuit of their own vision.

Harriet Bart's sculptures, objects, and artist books convey a sense of solidity, timelessness, and permanency within the fleeting present. In *THE RESERVE* Bart transforms a found Plexiglas trunk and a bale of shredded money into a poignant call for economic transparency and reference to the 2008 financial crisis. Her works from the *STRATA* series and *THE UNIVERSE* explore the alchemy of the word, changing mere text to shimmering gold.

Creeping out of corners and cracks, **Margaret Bowland's** roses made from United States currency and barbed wire question society's expectations regarding gender, race and beauty. From the series of work, *PAINTING THE ROSES RED*, the title references Lewis Carroll's villainous Queen of Hearts from *Alice in Wonderland*, who orders her minions to paint all white roses red. In Disney's animated film, they sorrowfully sing, "Oh, painting the roses red, And many a tear we shed, Because we know, They'll cease to grow, In fact, they'll soon be dead, And yet we go ahead, Painting the roses red." Even a flawless rose is not good enough; it must be changed and altered, made to fit the expectations of others, even if the end result kills.

Nancy Lorenz uses luxurious materials such as gold, silver and mother of pearl to reference the sublime. In *RED GOLD*, *CARDBOARD I* and *II* she evokes squalls of rain in energetic carvings on gold-leafed corrugated cardboard, blurring the lines between design and high art. Fusing a Japanese aesthetic with the incidental marks and unrestrained brushwork of Abstract Expressionism, Lorenz has inserted her luxurious materiality into the realm of art history.

Working exclusively with the ripe material of the U.S. Dollar, **Mark Wagner** creates collages that speak to the cultural, social, political and symbolic roles that money plays in our society. Wagner transforms this icon of American capitalism into ornate works which reference the visual effects of tapestries, paintings, engravings, mosaics and computer generated images, such as in SECURITY PATTERN. With humor and mastery of his technique, Wagner investigates a broad range of subjects, from the story of the founding fathers, to art historical icons, mythological tales and the language of architecture.

About SPRING/BREAK Art Show

SPRING/BREAK Art Show, New York City's curator-driven art fair, will return for its fourth installment in the spring of 2015 during Armory Arts Week. The fair will run concurrent with The Armory Show from March 3rd through 8th, 2015. From 2012 to 2014, SPRING/BREAK Art Show was held within the classrooms of the old schoolhouse at 32 Prince Street. With its commitment to appropriating historic and culturally relevant non-traditional exhibition space, the initiative will inhabit a new location within the third and fourth floors of **Skylight at Moynihan Station** at 307 West 31st Street at 8th Avenue. Skylight at Moynihan Station is located in the historic McKim, Mead & White designed James A. Farley Post Office Building. More than 80 curators will host unique, museum-quality projects in the former offices of the Post Office with exhibitions conceived around this year's central curatorial theme, **TRANSACTION**.

Special thanks to Driscoll Babcock Galleries, Morgan Lehman Gallery and Pavel Zoubok Gallery for loans to the exhibition.

Pictured clockwise from top left: Mark Wagner, VERY EXPENSIVE PUSH BROOM, 2008, mixed media assemblage, 61 x 16 x 6 inches, edition 6 of 9 (detail); Harriet Bart, THE RESERVE, vintage Plexiglas chest, shredded \$1 bills from the Federal Reserve, 16 ½ x 28 x 18 inches (detail); Margaret Bowland, PAINTING THE ROSES RED, 2013, United States Currency, barbed wire, oil paint, dimensions variable (detail); Nancy Lorenz, RED GOLD, CARDBOARD II, 2013, Red gold, gesso, clay, cardboard on panel, 24 x 18 inches (detail).