

EXIT STRATEGY

Jessica Vaughn

→ Unit 4 Huntingdon Estate

Bethnal Green Rd

London E1 6JU

21 September – 27 October
2018

Emalin is pleased to announce *Exit Strategy*, a solo exhibition of new works by the American artist Jessica Vaughn. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Jessica Vaughn's practice considers how materials - new, used and discarded - accumulate and inhabit space. Vaughn's investigation into specific materials interrogates the nature and site of their production, their position and circulation through different spaces as well as the relationship between their intrinsic functionality and the lived meaning they take on.

Exit Strategy is a continuation of Vaughn's investigations into how architectural structures reinforce segregation, addressing the modes in which minority bodies are expected to perform, comply and participate in American work environments. Comprised of sculptures and printed works, *Exit Strategy* reproduces the paperwork, office materials and furniture that fill bureaucratic forms of architecture: namely the office cubicle structure, stackable paper trays and different formats of documents.

As placeholders for the standards and efficiency of the bureaucratic system, both the paper trays and the flesh-toned cubicles represent basic but constitutive structural components that keep bureaucratic forms in place: the cubicles are stripped back to reveal the metal frames that support the structure of the mass-produced workspace, while the paper trays hold in place stacks of paperwork. As skeletal components and concealed materials, the two function as metaphors for the unseen people that care for and maintain the institutions that structure these forms of labour. Vaughn obtained the documents contained within the paper trays from US government Affirmative Action reports. These files are present and within reach but remain physically unobtainable in their presentation.

Echoing the countless pages enclosed in the trays, seven sheets of continuous form paper installed across the far corner of the gallery list an index of job titles and their respective wages collected from American job posting websites. Paraprofessional occupations, professions performed to take care of others, professions that keep both private and state institutions running, clean and in compliance comprise this list - work asked of, requested and expected for minorities and women to participate in. The information catalogued here is gleaned from employment websites made available in a range of American cities: Philadelphia, New York City, Washington DC and Chicago. Many of these professions, in turn, can be found enacted in Vaughn's video *Visible Hands*, in which close-up scenes of hands reproduce seemingly infinite motions of production. Thus, the material repetitions that come together in *Exit Strategy* resonate with the repetitive de-individualised nature of these modes of labour. Particularly the images of women's hands operating televised lotteries speak of the income-generating state apparatuses that instrumentalise and dictate those who participate in their production. As such, this body of work points to the forms of architecture and design that exist in workspaces as a starting point to identify elements that reproduced lived experience of economic and racial segregation.

Work details (clockwise from door):

Visible Hands, 2018

digital video

3:48 mins

A4: 1979 EEO Affirmative Action Plan

Affirmative Action: National Institutes of Health Does Not Fully Meet Federal Requirements

Affirmative Employment: Assessing Progress of EEO Groups in Key Federal Jobs Can Be Improved

EDA: Treatment of Blacks at the Economic Development Administration in the 1980s

EEO Advisory Council's 1978 Report

EEO Oversight: Functional Study of GAO's Career Ladder Promotional Process

Equal Employment Opportunity: Immigration and Naturalization Service's Equal Employment Opportunity Program

Equal Employment Opportunity: Women and Minority Aerospace Managers and Professionals

Federal Employment: Progress of Women and Minorities in Key Federal Jobs and Handling of EEO Complaints at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms

Report To The Honorable Shirley Chisholm House of Representatives: The National Institute of Education Should Further Increase Minority And Female Participation in its Activities

Selected Publications On Equal Employment Opportunity

Social Security Administration: Employment of and Service to Hispanics

What Is The EEO?, 2018

plastic, paper and hardware

dimensions variable / each tray element: 35.5 × 23 × 8 cm (14 × 9 × 3 inches)

55" x 15", 2018

matrix prints on paper

7 prints, each: 139.7 × 38.1 cm (55 × 15 inches)

ED 1 of 2

Depreciating Assets: Variable Dimensions, 2018

metal, lacquer paint and hardware

dimensions variable / approx. 138 × 130 × 131.5 cm (54 × 51 × 51 inches)

Depreciating Assets: Variable Dimensions, 2018

metal, lacquer paint and hardware

dimensions variable / approx. 131.5 × 130 × 137 cm (51 × 51 × 53 inches)

Jessica Vaughn (b. 1983, Chicago, IL, USA) received a BHA from Carnegie Mellon University and her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania. Selected exhibitions include: *FRONT* International Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art, Akron Art Museum (Cleveland, OH, USA. 2018); *Omnipresence*, The Kitchen (NY, USA. 2018); *Receipt of a Form*, Martos Gallery (NY, USA. 2018); *Material Deviance*, Sculpture Center (NY, USA. 2017); *Harlem Postcards*, The Studio Museum in Harlem (NY, USA. 2015); *Itinerant Belongings*, Slought Foundation (Philadelphia, PA, USA. 2014); and *Looking Back, Moving Forward*, Project Row Houses (Houston, TX, USA. 2013).

She was an artist-in-residence at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (Skowhegan, ME, USA); The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (NY, USA); and the Whitney Independent Study Program (NY, USA) and is the recipient of the 2018 Artadia Award (NY, USA).

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For further information please visit www.emalin.co.uk, email us on info@emalin.co.uk or call on +44 77 9464 5380.

Gallery opening hours: Wed-Sat, 11am-6pm and by appointment.