

Adam Milner  
*Meanwhile*

March 7–April 5, 2025

*Meanwhile*, Adam Milner's first New York solo exhibition, explores the transformation of personal objects as they shift from private to public space. Rooted in a practice of recontextualizing personal and found materials, Milner's works examine how objects hold meaning and how those meanings evolve and mutate through presentation.

The exhibition brings together several of the artist's ongoing projects: 156 red ink drawings on various food wrappers, two large paintings embedded with intimate found materials, two pink pantsuits on vintage Rootstein mannequins, and an assemblage of small sculptures alongside other personal items.

For Milner, the exhibition is a moment of pause, a situation where things are held still and considered complete. By pausing the constant flux of things, *Meanwhile* allows viewers to absorb otherwise marginal materials, ultimately challenging notions of intimacy, value, and perception.

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Adam Milner (b.1988, Denver, CO) is an artist living in Brooklyn, New York. Rooted in the slow accumulation and preservation of quotidian ephemera, Milner's practice blurs boundaries between private and public, work and leisure, and relishes in complications around how we identify or merge with the things we make and consume. Milner has previously created site-specific interventions into the archives of the Warhol, the Clyfford Still Museum, and the Greer Lankton Collection at the Mattress Factory. The artist's work can be found in galleries, museums, publications, public spaces, domestic settings, and online. Milner received a BFA from the University of Colorado, an MFA from Carnegie Mellon University, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Recently, Art21 highlighted the artist's practice in the film *Adam Milner Takes Care of the Details*.

Thank you Craig Jun Li for your support with the show, from mannequin platform fabrication and stretcher strategizing to moral support throughout the process. Thank you Colleen Kelsey for writing a beautiful text. Thanks to friends who visited during the making of the exhibition, like Adam Amram, Shobun Baile, Noah Furman, Megan Cline, and Carrie Rudd. Thanks to Dean Sobel, Joyce Tsai, and the staff at the Clyfford Still Museum for their support over the past several years with my work in their archives and throughout all other departments. The first Patricia Still suit was patterned and constructed by Mati Hays for unannounced performances at the Museum. The second was patterned and constructed by Willa Piro for this exhibition. Thank you Nancy Brown for helping with these vintage mannequins. The stair step platforms were constructed with assistance by Ramón Guzman. Thanks to all friends who have contributed items to this assortment. Things made and gifted by Craig Jun Li, Curtis Welteroth, Jes Fan, Sarah Wallace Scott, and my dad Keith Milner appear in the exhibition in the form of silver-covered almond and Tums, a paper scale model filing cabinet, a plastic hand impression, a paper hand impression, and a bronze Snoopy, respectively. Dad also loaned the Jingle Belle statuette. The tiny rock art that looks like my art was found and given to me by Jess Hicks. Thanks to Chengtao Yi and Jacek Paliwoda for install support and Marc Tatti for documentation. Thank you Matheus, Sofia, and Yehudi Hollander-Pappi for your support and care. Thank you Rain for this opportunity to share my work.

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Everything begins with an egg. And the egg is a void. I think of the Clarice Lispector short story, “The Egg and The Chicken,” and the lucid yet madcap succession of these lines: “In the morning in the kitchen on the table I see the egg...Immediately I perceive that one cannot be seeing an egg. Seeing an egg never remains in the present.” Invisibility with infinite capacity.

I don’t know if Adam has thought of capacity as one of the materials in this work. The artist’s idiosyncratic collecting, reconfiguring, and contextualizing of found objects questions how we live and engage with the items around us. Time, order, and subject are mutable. A cigarette contains a world. I can see it lit, between lips, alone with another in the pack, and ground under a heel, part of a narrative where the action unfolds through immeasurable duration. Tangible fragments and accumulated detritus become physical expressions of intimacy, perhaps even transgression.

A red rose buds and blooms; cigarettes and eggs split. The environment created by the artist is one of asides and interludes. The power—and emotional sleight of hand—comes from the peripheral. These things exist, even in rooms you cannot see, living on tabletops or forgotten under furniture. The studio is transient and preconceived assumptions of display are revocable. Dust (mostly) prevents itself from settling.

There is something so alien about an egg and its ability to obscure itself, that looping and overlapping of absence and presence. Milner plays with appearances, of being in the thing and outside of the thing. Desire is there too, a scrim of residue asking us if we want to become whole.

—Colleen Kelsey, February 2025