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Gaylen Gerber, Park McArthur,
Jim Nutt
Galerie Emanuel Layr
11.6. – 1.8.2015

One of the more confounding exhibitions of the languorous summer was Galerie Emanuel Layr's all-American line-up featuring Gaylen Gerber, Park McArthur, and Jim Nutt. Ostensibly a quasi-solo show by influential conceptualist Gerber, it was a small miracle to see the legendary Chicago imagist actually showing in Vienna. Nutt's two handsomely framed drawings from 2009 and 2012 didn't come close to the way his major paintings hover between a wicked Pop and dastardly surreal, but

still, his sure-handed asymmetrical line and cubist style are a clinic in how not to draw the human face and still make it believably original. Park McArthur sent in a massive pair of lumpy blocks of yellowing Styrofoam, gnawed along the edges. They sit alone in the main space and anteroom, where you maneuver around a dense girth that belies the lightness of the actual material. I wondered about the shipping cost for these two bulky readymades. At a loss as to what to make of their limited status as sculpture or as art, I found it useful to think of these sound-absorbing space-invading blocks in the vein of Wittgenstein's useless forms. They're also, presumably, proxies for the paraplegic artist's own body. Gerber's *Backdrop* enveloped the two artists' work, as if in a snug womb. This wallpaper of photographic background paper in neutral gray had creases that gave the paper a wavy grid effect. Hardly a profit-making endeavor, the exhibition was an exercise in hermetic conceptual practice.



Above: Gaylen Gerber, *Backdrop*
Left: Park McArthur, *Polyurethane Foam*