

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Domenick Ammirati, "Freize Week: Let's Fucking Gooooooooooooo?," *Spigot*. May 15, 2023.

Spigot

Freize Week: Let's Fucking Gooooooooooooo?

Barney, Donnelly, Paglen, Weeks, and more— plus the cheapest white wine at Bacaro

Feeling a little quid pro quo this week? Perfect timing: Frieze is coming to New York. Spigot is here to help you plan your days and nights.

EXHIBITIONS



Matthew Barney, *Secondary*, 2023. Installation view, Barney studio, Long Island City, New York

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Matthew Barney's *Secondary*

Matthew Barney has been due for a comeback for a while now. His influence (or prescience) vis-à-vis the biomorphic, quasi-theistic, and eccentrically symbolic is subtly everywhere; to pick just two divergent examples currently on view in New York, look to Josh Kline's cycles of video and sculpture packing them in at the Whitney and the Paul Thek-ier excursions of Kelly Akashi at Tanya Bonadkar, where the LA-based artist connects esoterica, torqued and fluid body-forms, and the literal cosmos.

Barney's worked in a massive warehouse on a pier in Long Island City for something like two decades. He's finally leaving it (even a blue-chip artist can only afford waterfront real-estate in New York for so long, I suppose), but before then he's turning it into an exhibition space. Using a familiar expressive vocabulary that's sure to prime the pump of his reappreciation, the new work, titled *Secondary*, plays the hits: American football, violence and masculinity, and, as Barney pithily puts it, "materials-based choreography." Inside the building, there's an hour-long five-channel movie, the colorful astroturf on which the film was shot, and a six-foot-trench that floods and drains with the tides, a jewel-box Earthwork *cum* Gordon Matta-Clark.

Secondary opened Thursday night in the flickering glow of the huge digital timepiece mounted on the warehouse's East River facade. (Used as a game clock in the film, it was in fact built as a Trump-term countdown clock.) Inside, the film screened on four giant monitors and a Jumbotron. At the risk of overstatement, I think it might just be great. *Secondary* is an operatic apotheosis of a famously terrible incident when a player was paralyzed on an NFL field in 1978. In returning to familiar themes and motifs after setting them aside, Barney has rendered them with a new specificity. As

GLADSTONE GALLERY

events progress, they remain mapped to their template, which results in a helpful but hardly diluting degree of clarity: in a context of vocalizing referees who conjure *Macbeth's* witches and footballs of translucent goo, linearity is still fairly outré.

There's a lot to say about the piece and little room here. But the most striking of *Secondary's* myriad remarkable elements (which include a gleeful choral deployment of the death-metal stylings of Oakland/LA Raiders fans) is the captivating exactitude of its choreography. The cast, which includes the artist, spotlights a number of well-known dancers, including the piece's movement director, David Thomson, and Wally Cardona. Has Barney actually been dance all along?