

ARTNEWS

ART OF THE CITY

Park McArthur Prods MoMA Expansion, Heather Guertin's Luscious Paintings, and Ramiken Returns

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Installation view of "Projects 195: Park McArthur," October 27, 2018–January 27, 2019, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

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In this ART OF THE CITY column: PARK MCARTHUR offers an elegant critique of MoMA's big-budget expansion (and philanthropy writ large), HEATHER GUERTIN serves up a fresh batch of paintings at Brennan & Griffin, and the newly relocated RAMIKEN CRUCIBLE comes out swinging.

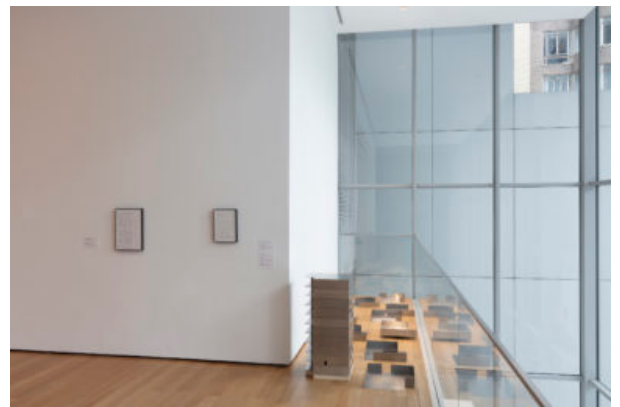
1. RIP IT UP AND START AGAIN

Offered the chance to have an exhibition in a prime space at the **Museum of Modern Art** in New York—an opportunity that any early-career artist would kill for—**Park McArthur** has responded by leaving it nearly empty.

The title of the New Yorker's show, "Projects 195: Park McArthur," appears in huge letters wrapped around two walls of a capacious fourth-floor gallery that overlooks the museum's sculpture garden. There are also two leather couches and two frames hanging on the wall that hold promotional papers for 53W53, the 82-story Jean Nouvel–designed luxury condo tower that will house part of MoMA's forthcoming \$400 million expansion. Those papers list some of the "impeccably detailed residences" available—a \$3.65 million one-bedroom and a \$42.5 million four-bedroom—and note that 53W53 sports amenities like a pet concierge, "poolside vertical hydroponic gardens," and emergency generator support.

Through her exhibition, McArthur is proposing a very different kind of structure. In an accompanying audio guide, which is the heart of this incisive artist's project, a museum educator named **Paula Stuttmann** intones, "Now I invite you to imagine a building. This building does not exist. At present it lives in the mind of the artist as a persistent daydream." It has studios, a ramped indoor pool, and accessible common spaces where "you overhear conversations and laughter." Income is "not the determining factor for living here."

A metal model of a building that looks a bit like part of MoMA sits, partially hidden, in an alcove off the almost-vacant gallery. Miniature versions of the room you're standing in—one with a ramped pool—are arrayed on the floor behind it, like architectural proposals awaiting customization and funding. Throughout the exhibition's run (through January 27, 2019), they will be reconfigured.



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The audio component of the show, which is available online, is titled PARA-SITES (2018), and in her bracingly spare installation, which was curated by MoMA's Magnus Schaefer with Tara Keny, McArthur is asking of the big-ticket construction work that is underway: Who is feeding off of whom here? And, more broadly, what tradeoffs—in terms of money, power, and physical space—do our arts institutions facilitate? Right now, some 150 homes for the very wealthy are being readied high in the sky, and about 50,000 square feet of exhibition space is being added to MoMA. The audio points also out the letters on the wall denoting the David Geffen Galleries, named in honor of that entertainment magnate's \$100 million donation to MoMA in 2016.

Meanwhile, homelessness in New York is the highest it has been since the 1930s, and about one in ten children in the city's public schools sleeps in temporary housing. Not far from MoMA, work continues on a public sculpture—Thomas Heatherwick's ridiculous Vessel—that has cost more than \$150 million to build.

With impressive concision, McArthur is underscoring the capriciousness and cruelty in how philanthropy and real estate operate today. Is she having her cake and eating it, too, sharing fanciful and politically loaded plans from within the comfort of the institution? Sure. But she's doing what she can: spotlighting a problem and offering one possible alternative. Others will need to act. "Now I invite you to imagine a building," her piece says. "This building does not exist." Not yet.