

ARTslant

new york

Material Nature
by Yaelle Amir

Host
Jeff Bailey Gallery
511 W. 25th St #207 , New York, NY 10001
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In his current exhibition, *Host*, Christian Maychack has propelled his sculptural oeuvre forward by way of a return to the essence of materiality. While his previous works evolved from existing matter such as a 2x4 or wooden bench, here he positions delicate found tree branches at the epicenter of the seven sculptures on view.



When observed from a distance, these works appear quite raw and haphazard; it is only upon a closer examination that we recognize the subtle polished edges of the branches' tips, a variety of distinct surfaces, and a coherent connection between the various compositional elements. Standing in the gallery space, we cannot help but sense the presence of objects in the midst of transmutation—congealing and twisting into being out of a most basic form of nature.

Although the branches dictate the composition of these works, the structures that ultimately emerge allude to utilitarian objects. Serving as the backbone of *Organizer* (2009), a vertical branch pierces through an object that resembles a desk organizer made of Maychack's signature material, Magic Sculpt. Both *Untitled* (2009) and *Crossover* (2009) conjure architectural models in which tree branches, MDF, Magic Sculpt and marker boards tensely intersect to suggest the outcomes of fantasy nature-cum-architecture projects. By covering up the branch, yet leaving the structure's

function open-ended, Maychack proposes a more fluid approach to the perception of our surroundings—recognizing the inter-changeability between organic and man-made creations.



Images: *Organizer* (2009), tree branches and Magic Sculpt; *Crossover* (2009), tree branch, wood, mdf, Magic Sculpt and latex paint; *Host* (2009), Installation. Courtesy the artist, Jeff Bailey Gallery, New York and Gregory Lind Gallery, San Francisco.