

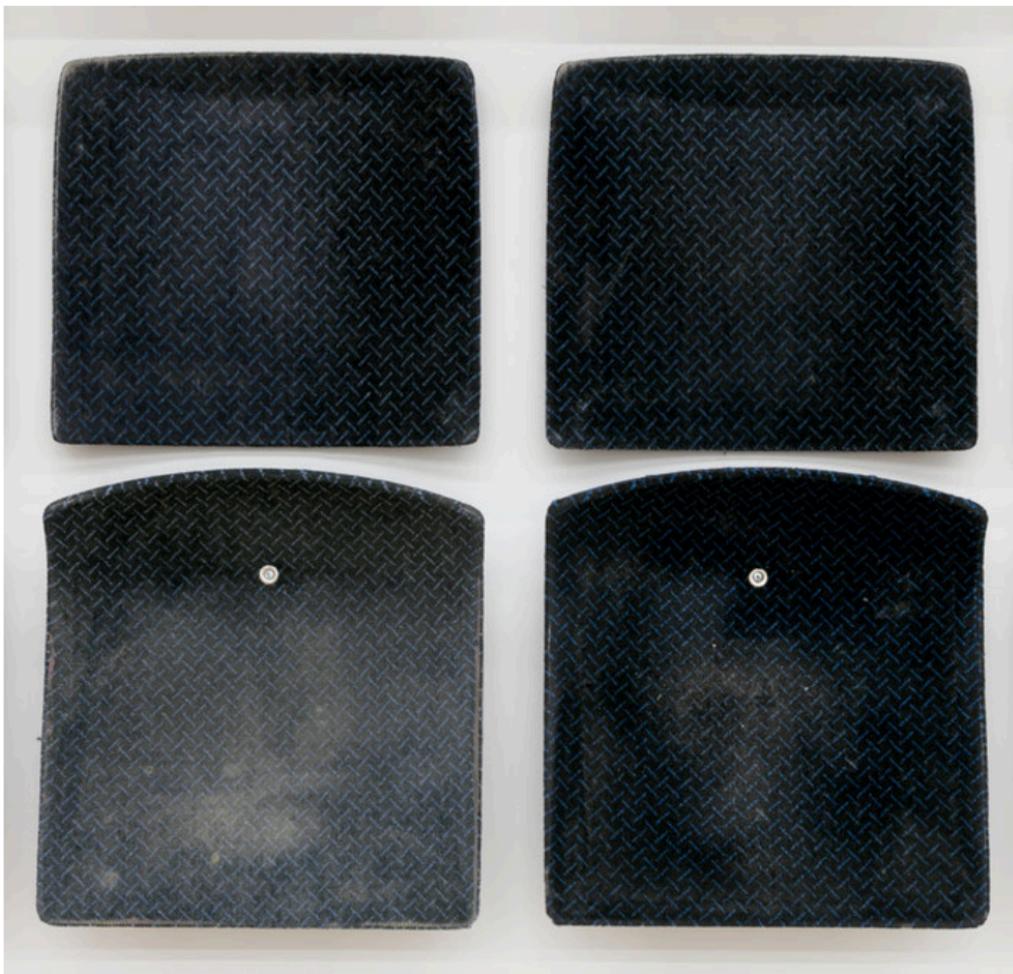
MARTOS GALLERY

Heinrich, Will, "What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week," *The New York Times*, May 25, 2017

The New York Times

What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week

MAY 25, 2017



"After Willis," made of discarded Chicago Transit Authority train seats, by Jessica Vaughn.
Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery

INVISIBLE MAN

Through June 24. Martos Gallery, 41 Elizabeth Street, Manhattan; 212-560-0670, martosgallery.com.

Martos Gallery's director, Ebony L. Haynes, named [the inaugural exhibition](#) at its new Chinatown home after Ralph Ellison's 1952 novel, "Invisible Man," whose hero is invisible because people "refuse to see" him. A grouping of spare works by Torkwase Dyson, Kayode Ojo, Pope.L and Jessica Vaughn, this show is a brilliant solution to the contemporary art-world version of the same problem, demonstrating how to show work in a way that includes but is not limited to its makers' blackness.

If you stare across the room at Ms. Vaughn's inspired display of discarded Chicago Transit Authority train seats, they look interchangeable, but on closer inspection, each seat reveals a distinct pattern of wear. Every two-and-a-half minutes exactly, Pope.L's "Pedestal," an upside-down water fountain bolted to the ceiling, releases a thin jet of water into a hole in the floor. It's a disquieting meditation on the nature of time — endlessly replenished but endlessly fleeting — made more ominous by "Well (elh version)," a series of small ledges bearing water glasses that must be topped up with eyedroppers every day by gallery staff.



Pope.L's "Well (elh version)," a series of small ledges bearing water glasses that must be topped up with eyedroppers every day by gallery employees.

Pope.L, Martos Gallery and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, N.Y.

Each of Ms. Dyson's three white-on-gray paintings is 6 feet wide by 8 feet tall and dominated by a subtle circular pattern applied with plastery strokes of a palette knife. But sharp pencil lines and brighter white wedges cut through this engulfing fog like spirit through flesh. Mr. Ojo's upended brown couch, meanwhile, on which he's draped a silvery sequined prom dress, evokes a fascinating combination of potential and regret. All together it makes for a starkly minimal aesthetic, but one that elevates, instead of eliding, the human body.



An untitled work, displaying an upended brown couch draped with a silver prom dress, by Kayode Ojo. Courtesy of the artist and Martos Gallery