

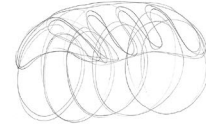
## *Untitled (inflatable house, zip ties, blower)*

Bat-Ami Rivlin

August 6 - September 5, 2021

Opening Reception: Friday, August 6, 12-6pm

GALLERY II



Bat-Ami Rivlin, *Untitled (inflatable house, zip ties, blower)*, 2021, pencil on paper (plan), 8 1/2 x 11 inches.

Dear Christian,

I've been thinking about my work in relation to this ongoing shift of materiality in the world. At first, the vacuum of tangibility, my inability to access spaces or see family face-to-face, defined my experience of the quarantine. Then, I started thinking about how strong of an effect the materials in my vicinity have on me. How could I possibly make sculpture with this digital buffer in between me and everything else?

For the first three months of staying at home, I took a flashlight and a cutout stencil that read "Am I Essential?" and projected the words onto the building across the street from my window. I took a photo of the inside of my fridge every day. I taped markings on the floor for my tripod so that the photos of its contents would all have the same angle and framing. It was the only space that would significantly change, unlike the rest of my apartment that refused to give me any real sense of passing time. The living areas gradually grew synonymous with my body. At the height of the pandemic, I kept telling friends over Zoom calls that I was afraid to not know how to leave. It was as though my body had inflated itself to fill every room. I feared that when we could eventually reemerge into the public sphere, my body and mind, now conflated with my apartment, would fail to exit.

I cannot help but feel that even now, while we are still living in some sort of material void, the body expands. Both as space and as an object. The air-filled house, creating material volume as much as it is creating material void, becomes a tangible proxy for the merging of the body and the domestic in the face of the absence of public space. The inflatable is a material pun, an illustration of an external frame that's devoid of any structural integrity. Its aesthetic function crumpled with D-rings and cable ties into a knot of familiar forms. A humming blower sustaining its balloon volume.

I hope you are keeping safe. We are a few weeks after New York's lifting of all Covid restrictions and I am cautiously optimistic, though still afraid.

Sincerely,  
Bat-Ami

P.S. This press release was inspired by Baris Göktürk's exhibition text for *Public Secret* at Helena Anrather Gallery, which begins "Dear Helena." I found it so fitting with the times; when our political, social, and professional worlds are all collapsed into one private space, one can only write personally. This recontextualization of the press release gave me the freedom to write things that otherwise would have been lost in the formalities.

*Untitled (inflatable house, zip ties, blower)* is a solo project by New York-based artist and 2020-2021 A.I.R. Fellow **Bat-Ami Rivlin**. Comprising an installation of found and surplus object sculpture, the exhibition investigates material agency through the notion of function. This will be Rivlin's first solo exhibition with A.I.R. Gallery. Rivlin received her MFA from Columbia University in 2019 and has exhibited in venues such as M 2 3, The Jewish Museum, Fredric Snitzer Gallery, and New York Live Arts, among many others. Her work has been reviewed in publications such as *Artforum*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *BOMB Magazine* (interview), *Flash Art*, *Lef(t)*, and more. [www.batamirivlin.com](http://www.batamirivlin.com)

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains are the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact [info@airgallery.org](mailto:info@airgallery.org) for more information.

