

# Petzel

Roberta Smith, "Review: Adam McEwen's 'Harvest' Explores the Movement of People, Vehicles and Information," *The New York Times*, March 25, 2016, C20.

## The New York Times

ART & DESIGN

### Review: Adam McEwen's 'Harvest' Explores the Movement of People, Vehicles and Information

By ROBERTA SMITH MARCH 24, 2016



Adam McEwen is an excellent journeyman artist who keeps a low profile behind an astute recycling of objects and images. His work has a streamlined intelligence, attention to detail and austere beauty that make it seem transparent yet mysterious, straightforward yet perverse. His latest show, "Harvest" at Petzel Gallery, takes its theme from one of Jean-François Millet's paintings of gleaners in a field — talk about detail work. Its sculptures and paintings examine the movement of people, vehicles or information through relentlessly controlled channels.

"TSA" recreates the table and stack of plastic bins from airport security checkpoints but in stark white Corian (the table) and machined graphite (the bins). They're fragile, luminous and nonfunctional, like art.

Two dark minimalist sculptures, "IBM Blue Gene 1" and its mate "2," recreate the mass and exterior detailing of giant supercomputers, also in graphite. They evoke both the fictional runaway machine of the 1968 movie "2001: A Space Odyssey" and the actual data-gathering behemoths of the National Security Agency.

Four paintings appropriate black-and-white photographs of the sleek empty interiors of tunnels — Holland, Midtown, Lincoln and Brooklyn-Battery — connecting Manhattan to the surrounding area. Printed on sheets of cellulose sponge, a staple of kitchen cleanliness, they have the smoky allure of charcoal drawings until you see the bubbles. Nearby is a symbolic attempt to prevent easy access: an actual example of the sticklike door-to-floor locks endemic to unrehabilitated New York lofts and tenements — a madeleine for creative types of a certain age.

The final piece is interactive, a handsome steel-and-wood sculpture shaped like a giant K, a form that neatly accommodates a steep switchback staircase. It reaches almost to the ceiling, and a dead end.

Adam McEwen  
'Harvest'  
Petzel Gallery  
456 West 18th Street, Chelsea  
Through April 30

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/25/arts/design/review-adam-mcewens-harvest-explores-the-movement-of-people-vehicles-and-information.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/25/arts/design/review-adam-mcewens-harvest-explores-the-movement-of-people-vehicles-and-information.html?_r=0)