

M + B

ARTFORUM

CRITICS' PICKS

November 28, 2017
By Travis Diehl

Nevine Mahmoud

M+B

612 North Almont Drive
November 11–January 6

The title of Nevine Mahmoud's first solo show, "f o r e p l a y," goes just like that, the letters held apart. Likewise, the exhibition itself is desirously spaced, opening with *Primary encounter (pink tensions)* (all works 2017), comprising two big, pink marble blocks, one with a hole, the other, a corresponding peg. The pair is separated by a few charged feet of empty floor. Mahmoud combines a classical conceit—the erotics of marble sculpture—with a contemporary chill, as if Pygmalion were a Minimalist. And in case you get carried away with the idea of abstract penetration, a slick sense of humor keeps things real; two of the nine works on view, *Abacus arm 1* and *2*, resemble nothing so much as handrails threading soft stone rolls of toilet paper.

Breast shade and *Mother milk*, a bell shape suspended on a steel cable and a soft white blob on a glass plinth, respectively, are both tipped by pink resin nipples straight out of a Tom Wesselmann nude. The first piece trails a long wire to within a tantalizing half inch of the floor. It's important that it doesn't reach, of course—just like it's necessary that we can't touch art. *Slick slice*, an orange calcite wedge glazed with tearing glass, sits on a transparent pedestal so that one can take a look underneath. Poor, reflexive creature: You will.

— Travis Diehl



Nevine Mahmoud, *Breast shade*, 2017, alabaster and pigmented resin with stainless steel hardware, 13 x 18 1/2 x 18 1/2".